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ABSTRACT

This program focuses on therapeutic principles and methods for prelinguistic and early language learning, with the goals of increased cognitive functions and sensory awareness/interaction, expanded communicative repertoires, and increased caregiver interaction with the child through appropriate stimuli and assignment of communicative intent. The information presented is applicable to children who are developmentally delayed, sensory impaired, physically handicapped, severely learning disabled, mentally handicapped, neurologically impaired, orthopedically involved, autistic, neuralmuscular disordered, or environmentally deprived, in addition to infants and toddlers at risk and those with head trauma. Following an introductory chapter, chapters 2 and 3 discuss principles of early language learning and therapeutic intervention in prelinguistic children and the theoretical constructs of the language group paradigm. Chapter 4 provides examples for implementing the approximately 70 language group experiences presented in the rest of the book. These exercises include simple line drawing illustrations, sensory experiences, participatory activities, symbolic representations, and songs set to well-known tunes to foster familiarity with such language groups as fruits and vegetables, events, and objects, and individual members of these groups such as grapefruit, Halloween, and shoes. For each exercise, the context, content vocabulary, materials needed, activity preparation, and procedure are described. (PB)

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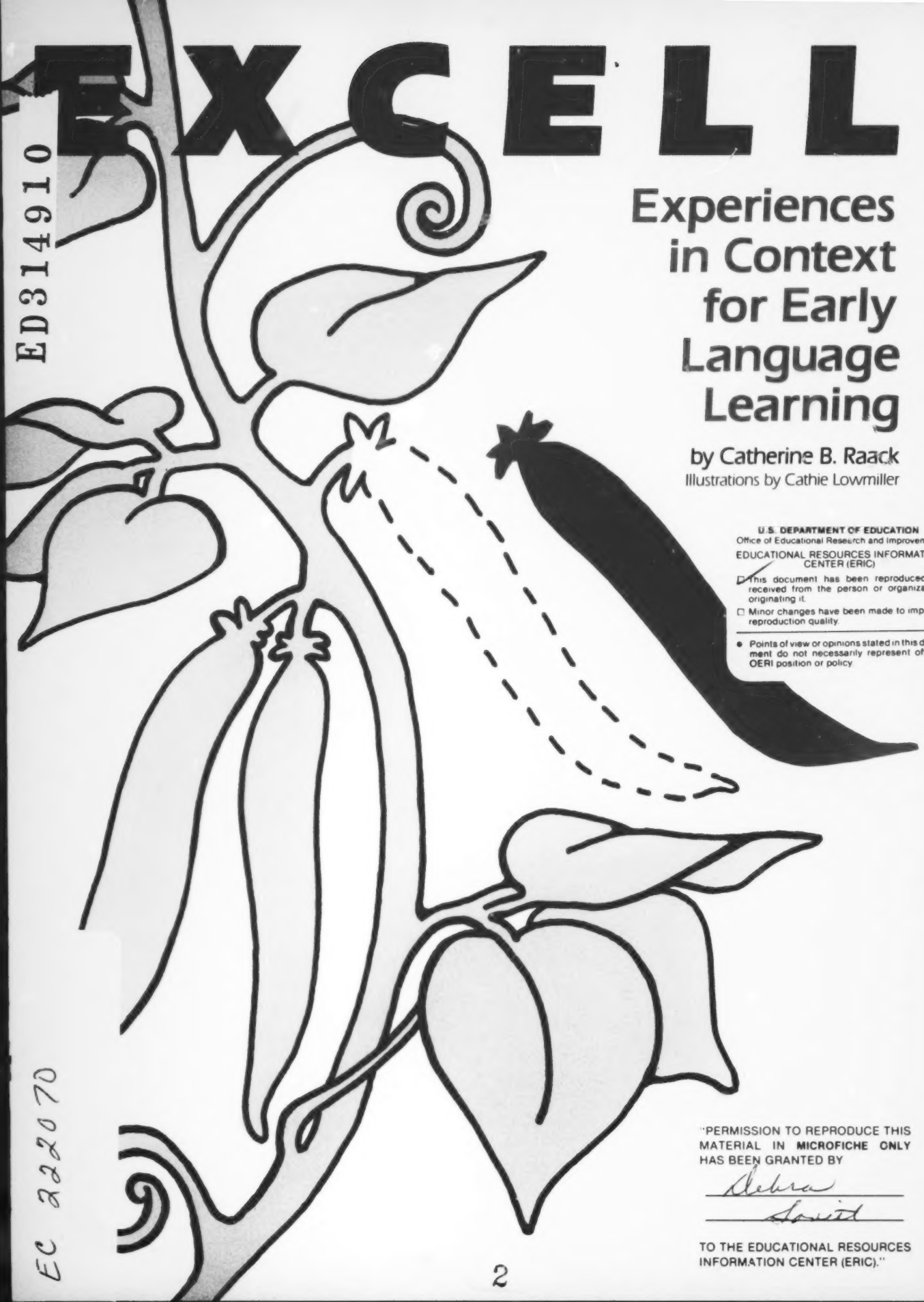
Experiences in Context for Early Language Learning

by Catherine B. Raack
Illustrations by Cathie Lowmiller



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EXCELL

Experiences in Context for Early Language Learning

by Catherine B. Raack, M.A., CCC-SLP
Illustrations by Cathie Lowmiller

Communication Skill Builders®
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To all the handicapped children
I have had the pleasure of knowing.
Thank you for showing me
how to find
wonder and enjoyment
in the simple things in life.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Catherine B. Raack is Executive Director of Community Therapy Services, Schaumburg, Illinois. Within the clinic she offers speech and language diagnostics and therapeutics. She also organizes service delivery models, and provides contractual services to hospitals, pediatrics skilled care facilities, educational cooperatives, Title I agencies, 0-3 programs, private and public schools, preschools, and vocational and rehabilitation centers. Ms. Raack conducts seminars, develops educational curricula, and provides consultations to state and federally supported agencies and programs servicing a variety of communicatively handicapped children and developmentally delayed adults. She is consultant to the Illinois Department of Public Health on issues pertaining to failure to thrive.

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PART 1
Introduction

1
Overview

POPULATION

The therapeutic information presented in *EXCELL* is relevant and directly applicable to children who are developmentally delayed, sensory impaired, physically handicapped, severely learning disabled, mentally handicapped, neurologically impaired, orthopedically involved, autistic, neuralmuscular disordered, or environmentally deprived; infants and toddlers at risk; and those with head trauma.

PURPOSES

EXCELL focuses on therapeutic principles and methods for prelinguistic and early language learning. The purposes are:

1. To facilitate the child's level of cognitive functions (within the sensorimotor motor developmental period) by increasing sensory awareness, attention, anticipation, motoric interaction with objects and people, initiation, and intention.
2. To facilitate the expansion of communicative repertoires including gazing, gesturing, and vocalizing, thereby increasing available language forms.
3. To facilitate caregiver/teacher interaction with the child by increasing appropriate presentation of stimuli, contextual goal elicitation, relevant language models, and the assignment of communicative intent.

PRINCIPLES

The critical components of comprehensive therapy are discussed in Chapter 2, "Principles of Early Language Learning and Therapeutic Intervention in Prelinguistic Children." In that chapter we will:

1. Describe the unique aspects of language learning in individuals who have sensory, motor, or cognitive handicaps.
2. Compare traditional methods of language facilitation with the more natural methods of contextual language facilitation.
3. Highlight the linguistic roles of the mature language user in the client's environment.

BACKGROUND

The information presented in Chapter 3, "Language Groups for Prelinguistic Children," outlines the theoretical constructs of the language group paradigm, including:

1. Thematic contextualization. All language and stimuli that are presented should be in the context of some thing or some event which is mutually shared and significant to the client.
2. Active participation. This structured participation allows each object to be experienced through the senses and for real objects to be enacted upon through a motor activity while taking turns with an adult within the group.
3. Symbolic representation. Because language is a symbol system and thought processes are based on the ability to make some generalizations about the world, each language group includes a symbol (picture and a song) that represents the object or events in the group.
4. Dyadic interaction. Inherent in this term is the concept of two individuals interacting with mutual expectations of input and response to the interaction. Communicative intent is assigned to each gazing, gesturing, and vocalizing response; and "no response" is perceived as a response.

LONG-TERM GOALS OF THE LANGUAGE GROUPS

1. To increase receptive vocabulary to include awareness of labels for objects (nouns) and the characteristics of these objects.
2. To increase sensorimotor skills for awareness of and attention to sensory stimuli.
3. To increase perceptual motor skills to expand awareness of hands and objects in hands.
4. To increase fine motor skills for functional tasks and for object exploration and manipulation.
5. To increase the ability to attend, participate, anticipate, initiate, and imitate.
6. To increase representational or symbolic thought to expand the level of awareness for objects, pictures, and words.
7. To increase expressive language by developing gazing, gesturing, and verbal methods of communicating.
8. To increase communicative situations by training caregivers to assign communicative intent to every repertoire employed.

A FORMAT FOR THE SHORT-TERM GOAL PROCESS

Determining Individualized Language Group Goals via Ongoing Therapeutic Diagnostic Intervention

Short-term goals may be determined through applying Guidelines for Goal Determination (pages 6-12). This outline may function as a format from which one may record clinical observations or as guidelines in an intake interview. The outline also may be used to collect ongoing information during the therapeutic diagnostic process.

See pages 13-15 for a sample Speech and Language Report based on the Guidelines.

When recording information, it may be valuable to document whether the task statement made was based on a clinical observation, a report from an interview with a caregiver, or an elicited response/interaction from a therapist's cues.

The specific purposes of the Guidelines are:

1. To determine each child's present developmental level of functioning.
2. To ascertain individualized sensorimotor, cognitive, behavioral, speech, and communication objectives.
3. To examine successful methods of:

   Prompting and eliciting desired responses during educational tasks.

   Diminishing undesirable variables or behaviors which may intrude on learning.

   Developing and expanding each child's objectives through interaction with objects, events, and people.
4. To document each child's progress over the course of the year.
5. To reevaluate each child's treatment plan for the following year, thereby establishing a procedure for maintaining ongoing individualized treatment for each child within the language group paradigm.

GUIDELINES FOR GOAL DETERMINATION

I. Sensorimotor potentials

A. Auditory

1. Primitive responses (eye blink, cessation, twitch)
2. Searching strategies and/or localization responses
3. Hyposensitivity (lack of response) and/or suspected diminished acuity
4. Hypersensitivity (startle, withdrawal, irritation)
5. Response changes:
   a. Over time and repeated stimuli presentations (habituation, increased sensitivity, diminished attention)
   b. With various presentation methods (requires gradual presentation, graded loudness, self-initiation of stimulation)
   c. With specific characteristics of stimuli (novelty, musical, vocal with exaggerated prosody, vocal with stress as in babbling or chanting, pitch variations)

B. Visual

1. Ability to focus or fixate
2. Searching and/or tracking strategies
3. Attention to objects, people, events (staring into nothingness, unusual gazing patterns, attention to only specific objects or people, attention to self in mirror)
4. Hyposensitivity (lack of response) and/or diminished acuity (no response to light or object movements)—Does the child:
   a. Avoid eye contact and instructional gazing?
   b. Use periphery to look or attend only on one side?
   c. Have motor patterns which preclude certain gazing patterns (ATNR, reduced head control, contractures)?
5. Hypersensitivity
   a. To light
   b. To visual commotion
   c. To extra stimuli with distractibility
   d. To foreground/background tasks
6. Eye-hand orientation—Does the child:
   a. Look at hands?
   b. Perseverate on hands?
   c. Look at hands when object is brought to them?
   d. Look at hands and object when reaching for the object?

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7. Response changes:
   a. Over time and repeated stimuli presentations (habituation, increased sensitivity, diminished attention)
   b. With various presentation methods (expectation, distance, frequency, movement)
   c. With specific stimuli characteristics (color, pattern, size, novelty, shape, motion, shininess)

C. Tactile
1. Hypersensitivity—Does the child:
   a. Protest caretaking where touch is involved?
   b. Seem constantly alerted by touch?
2. Hyposensitivity—Does the child:
   a. Seem to have reduced sensitivity to temperature, touch, or pain?
   b. Appear to have diminished ability to localize touch?
3. Response changes:
   a. Over time and repeated stimuli presentations (habituation, increased sensitivity, diminished attention as in falling asleep or totally shutting down)
   b. With various presentation methods (verbal cues, deep pressure *vs* light pressure, graded from deep to light, marked differences on certain areas of the body)
   c. With specific stimuli characteristics (temperature, soft *vs* hard, smooth *vs* rough, creaminess as in lotions)

D. Olfaction—Does the child exhibit:
1. Hypersensitivity or hyposensitivity?
2. Exploration function?
3. Self-stimulation?

E. Movement patterns
1. Does the child exhibit head control to hold head upright and turn left and right?
2. Can the child reach for objects and people?
3. Does the child demonstrate a voluntary grasp, and is it ulner, palmer, pincer, other?
4. Does the child demonstrate a voluntary release?
5. Are there negative compensatory patterns which are evidenced in motor attempts? These may include:
   a. The tendency to hyperextend
   b. Changes in muscle tone
   c. The predominance of primitive reflexes (mouth opening, rooting, and/or asymmetrical tonic neck reflexes)

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d. Oral-motor overflow—Deviant oral-motor patterns due to effort
e. Associated reactions—Deviant oral-motor patterns related to specific tasks (These patterns always look the same and may continue longer.)
f. Increased drooling

F. Integration
1. Overload—Does the child exhibit the warning signs which T. Berry Brazelton has associated with sensorimotor overload? (Irregular respiratory patterns, obligatory breathing, turning blue, gagging, yawning, grimacing, extending, moving arms and legs in attempt to get hand to mouth, hiccupping, coughing, sneezing, crying, shutting down or tuning out, turning limp and pale)
2. Hyperresponses—Does the child demonstrate hyperresponses, not necessarily in response to auditory or visual but in response to (excess) stimulation?
3. Accommodation/Habituation:
a. Does graded stimulation appear to facilitate management?
b. Does time provide the ability to manage the stimulation?
c. Does self-initiation improve stimuli management?

II. Cognition

A. Attention
1. Prolonged attention (approximate length of attention time most frequently demonstrated)
2. Evidence of mutual attention (attending with another person and/or filling conversational turn with gazing, gesturing, or vocalizing)
3. Persistence in communicative attempts if not attended to or if appropriate intent is not assigned
4. Observed repairs, such as expanding or changing communicative repertoires, to attempt to communicative desired intent
5. Satisfaction when intent is comprehended or fulfilled
6. Social distance required for any interaction

B. Anticipation
1. Does the child anticipate:
a. The recurrence of stimuli?
b. Having to perform a motor task?
c. Being fed or receiving food?
d. Being washed?
e. The beginning of a classroom event?
f. The occurrence of events based on the presence of certain people?
g. The ending of an event?
h. The next event to occur during a specific or familiar task or event?

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i. Events that will occur during the day?
j. Events occurring during the week?

2. Does the anticipation appear:
   a. Stimuli contingent?
   b. Related to a specific verbal cue?
   c. Related to some comprehension of the language being offered in the context?
   d. Routine oriented and a function of general awareness of events?
3. Does the child demonstrate a sense of humor for:
   a. Events that are occurring?
   b. Anticipated events that are about to occur?

C. Manipulation—Does the child:
1. Exhibit only awareness or attention to objects and the actions of objects?
2. Utilize sensory exploration?
3. Employ intentional repetitive actions on objects?
4. Display awareness of object permanence?
5. Utilize functional tool use?
   a. As a means of attaining adult attention—grabbing, reaching, holding up, showing, pointing, giving, taking, breaking, throwing, dropping, banging, or repetitive manipulation
   b. On self, on others, on another object, or on a representational figure such as a doll
   c. With objects as symbols
      (1) In communication (brings mother blanket to request going to bed, diaper to ask for changing, book to ask for a story)
      (2) In imaginary play
      (3) In relating to pictures

III. Behavior

A. Repetitive behaviors

B. Perseverations

C. Self-abuse
1. Automatic and nonpurposeful
2. Overstimulation or hypersensitive reaction
3. Understimulation or hyposensitive reaction
4. Emotional reaction
5. Attempt to communicate something

D. Aggression or refusal

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IV. Speech

A. Respiration

1. Shallow and lacking normal depth
2. Irregular, due to:
   a. No known stimuli
   b. Excitement or change of stimuli
   c. Movement
   d. Drinking or eating
   e. Changes in room temperature
3. Are there respiratory patterns which may be described as clavicular, abdominal, thoracic? Is there rib flaring or retraction of the jugular notch of the sternum? Are these patterns position or activity dependent?

B. Phonation

1. Does the child phonate on inhalation? Are nasal snorts or pharyngeal fricatives observed?
2. Does the child have difficulty initiating phonation:
   a. During cough or grunt?
   b. During cry, laugh, or squeal?
   c. During vocalization attempts?
3. Description of initiation difficulties:
   a. Open laryngeal blocks
   b. Closed laryngeal blocks
   c. Voicing with hard glottal attacks
   d. Voicing with extension or jaw thrusting
4. During continued phonation:
   a. Does initiation improve and phonation become more relaxed?
   b. Does the child begin to show abnormal movement patterns such as extension?
   c. Does the child begin to acoustically demonstrate evidence of hyperfunction, such as rising pitch?
5. Vocal quality and resonance characteristics:
   a. Nasal, pharyngeal, oral resonance
   b. Appropriate variations in resonance
   c. Harsh, hoarse, strident quality
   d. Appropriate vocal quality

C. Sounds

1. Describe sounds produced as primarily vowels, nasals, glides, fricatives, labials; voiced and unvoiced; and typical combinations during distress, vocal play, and communicative attempts.
2. Describe sound durations or syllabic combinations.
3. Describe use of prosodic aspects.

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V. Communicative repertoires and intentions

A. Vocal repertoires (any sound produced through the vocal tract)

1. Differentiated crying for hunger, pain, pleasure
2. Overresponses to interaction with excessive laughter, crying, or other emotional reactions
3. Experiment or play with voice, changing the pitch, loudness, and duration of sound in sound play
4. Attempts to attain adult attention through vocalization
5. Initiate interaction through vocalizations
6. Participate in conversational turn taking through vocalizations
7. Restate or change through vocalizations
8. Intone through imitation and/or with communicative attempts
9. Imitate
   a. Self: The child initially makes sounds reflexively and by kicking or cranking out sound during movement. In this situation the child begins to purposefully imitate those sounds being produced.
   b. Sounds being made at the time: While the child is making sounds, the adult imitates the child exactly; and the child responds by continuing sound production.
   c. Sounds made by an adult in the past but not being made at the present: While interacting with the child, the adult introduces sounds that the child has made in the past but was not making at the moment. The child responds by imitating those sounds back to the adult.
   d. New sounds never made before: During social play the adult makes sounds to the child that the child has never made before. The child responds by trying to produce those new sounds.

B. Gazing (any ocular movement, blink, diversion of gaze, tracking, ocular locating, or change in eye pattern)

1. Eye contact
   a. Hold eye contact for a period of time
   b. Search for eye contact
2. Stare at desired objects
3. Establish a joint focus with an adult and another object or person
4. Follow adult's line of regard
5. Follow a point
6. Look at a desired object, to the adult, and back to the object (or vice versa)
7. Divert gaze between two objects to make a choice between those objects

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C. Gesturing (any movements such as changes in muscle tone, reflexive movements, and intentional movements)

1. Facial expressions
2. Change muscle tone in response to stimuli
3. Reach to touch
4. Push away to reject
5. Perform actions related to events to request continued action (for example, continue rocking after caretaker stops rocking)
6. Demonstrate excitement by clapping, kicking, bouncing, or other movement
7. Imitate body movements and gestures of others
8. Shake head yes or no
9. Gesture daily events or make up gestures for objects

D. Intention

1. Seek others, respond to familiar people
2. Demonstrate emotional reactions to another's emotion
3. Employ communicative functions such as requesting, calling, exclaiming, commenting, terminating, recurrence, rejection, greeting, emoting, existence, disappearance, nonexistence, or possession

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SAMPLE
SPEECH AND LANGUAGE REPORT
(Based on Guidelines for Goal Determination)

Name _____ Therapist _____

Date _____ Classroom _____

I. Sensorimotor potentials

A. Auditory

J. demonstrates the ability to use searching strategies to localize a sound source; however, his response time is diminished due to reduced head control. He also demonstrates a hypersensitivity to loud auditory stimuli and he is unable to habituate over a period of time. His hypersensitivity remains even if he is given a verbal warning that the sound will occur and even if the stimuli are presented in graded intervals of loudness. He responds appropriately to speech and language, and he does not appear to need an exaggerated prosody in order to elicit responses.

B. Visual

J. is able to focus and fixate on visual stimuli. He utilizes searching strategies and he has a coordinated eye-hand reach.

C. Tactile

No marked characteristics

D. Olfaction

No marked characteristics

E. Movement patterns

J. has reduced head control. He uses a pulmar grasp, and it remains very difficult for him to voluntarily release objects. He has a tendency to hyperextend when excited, and oral-motor overflow is observed whenever he is attempting a motor task or anticipating motor performance.

F. Integration

Hyperactive responses are observed with excess stimulation; however, this appears to be somewhat related to his excitement and his desire to participate in events. "Relax" cues seem to minimize his hyperextension, but oral-motor overflow and heightened levels of excitement continue. His excitement level appears to be not so much a response to sensory overload as it is a response to reduced environmental opportunity to participate in sensorimotor tasks.

II. Cognition

A. Attention

J. demonstrates the ability to attend for long periods of time. He is able to mutually attend with the caretaker to objects and events and to observe other children participating in events. He demonstrates persistence in communicative attempts and becomes very happy when communicative intent is comprehended and fulfilled. He does not require close proximity for interaction, and he is able to attend to interaction occurring across the room whether or not he is a member of the interactive events.

B. Anticipation

J. is able to anticipate the recurrence of an event, his turn during the language group, and the ending of an event. He is aware of events in his environment, and his general level of awareness does not appear strictly stimuli contingent. He is able to demonstrate a sense of humor for events occurring around him and for the anticipated outcome of events about to occur.

C. Manipulation

J.'s motor skills limit his ability to manipulate objects; however, he is able to attend to objects and attempts to manipulate them appropriately. He continues to utilize his tongue as one method of sensory exploration; however, he does not focus on this as a primary sensory modality. He demonstrates awareness of object permanence, and he likes to attempt to use objects on himself and on others. He is able to use objects as well as pictures for requesting. He has not been observed to engage in imaginary play; however, this may be due to lack of experience or ability to manipulate the object to demonstrate imaginary thought.

III. Behavior—Repetitive behaviors

J. has not been observed to participate in repetitive behaviors or perseverations. However, he has been observed to hand bite and to smear feces. This appears to be an emotional reaction to his environment. Aggression and refusal have not been observed; however, he does cry whenever activities are terminated, and he becomes very upset when he is not included in events.

IV. Speech

A. Respiration

J. demonstrates the ability to sustain phonation through respiration, and no abnormal breathing patterns have been noted.

B. Phonation

He phonates on exhalation and he does not demonstrate difficulty initiating phonation. With excitement levels, phonation increases in loudness and pitch rises. Phonations may be described primarily as variations of open vowels. His vocal quality remains unmarked; however, there is some predominance of pharyngeal resonance which accompanies tongue protrusion during oral-motor overflow.

C. Sounds

Sounds remain primarily open vowels with the use of prosodic aspects for highlighting emotional states.

V. Communicative repertoires and intentions

A. Vocal repertoires

J. uses differentiated crying, and he responds to interaction through prolonged eye contact and vocalizations. He does not engage in imitative exchanges primarily because he is not capable of initiation; and it appears that his communicative focus is on gazing and gesturing patterns.

B. Gazing

J. is able to hold eye contact. He stares at desired objects. He establishes a joint focus, follows the line of regard, and follows a point. He looks at the desired object, back to the adult, and back to the object. He also diverts his gaze between two objects, and he is able to utilize pictures to request.

C. Gesturing

Gesturing includes facial expressions, reaching to touch, and pushing away to reject. J. is able to touch a green smiley face for "yes" and a red frowning face to say "no." His motor performance, however, limits the amount of sign language possible.

D. Intention

J. seeks others, and he relates to the emotions of other people. He employs the communicative functions of requesting, calling, commenting, terminating, recurrence, rejection, emoting, existence, disappearance, and nonexistence. He does not demonstrate possession; however, he is in an institutional environment where possession has not been encouraged.

VI. Recommendations

Based on the above, it appears that J. should be given verbal cues to help him relax when he becomes overexcited; and that those working with him should remain aware of his desire to participate in events so that he has more sensorimotor and interactive opportunities. Auditory stimuli should remain controlled so as not to overstimulate. He should be given the opportunity to visually follow around the room and use his eye-hand coordinated grasp in attempts to manipulate objects provided. He should be provided with ample time to respond when motor tasks are presented. He should be positioned securely in his wheelchair with downward pressure on the hips and flexion at the knees to help break up extension. He should be given a point of stability to help minimize oral-motor overflow (such as holding onto a caretaker's hand or onto his communication tray when attempting fine motor tasks). His attention and anticipation skills should be developed further by showing him all of the objects involved in a group and discussing with him the group events prior to initiation of the group. Incorporate J. as one of the "teachers" in the group event when he is in a group with the lower-functioning children. Give him as much opportunity as possible to attempt object manipulation and expand his communicative repertoires by using pictures to comment on the group and to discuss the group events with others who have not yet participated in the group.

2

Principles of Early Language Learning and Therapeutic Intervention in Prelinguistic Children

Society strikes early when the individual is helpless.
B. F. Skinner

Language is first acquired through environmental stimulation and positive interaction. Mothers often appear to do this naturally as they immediately begin to stimulate language development in their newborns. They love to introduce their babies to their friends and to take them visiting, to church, and out shopping. In this way, the child is exposed to a wide variety of environmental stimuli—new voices, strange smells, curious lighting situations, changes in movement. The mother talks to her child about their activities together. She watches her child for any response, be it an eye blink, a twitch, or a gurgle. Any gazing (eye) patterns, gesturing (motor) movements, and vocal (voice) productions by the child are immediately interpreted by the watchful caretaker as a child's interaction or response to the environment. Even if the child is only moving reflexively or responding to some undetermined internal stimulus, the mother interprets her baby's actions as responses, and she talks to her baby about each stimulus and the response. Soon the child learns how to initiate meaningful communication through very specific gazing, gesturing, and verbal repertoires. Throughout this exchange and newly established rapport, the mother is continuously reinforced for her communicative attempts and perceptions of her baby.

Since the natural chain of events begins with the doting caretaker providing stimulation and interaction with a loving and watchful eye, the importance of the caretaker's desire to interact with the child cannot be overemphasized. But what if the caretaker doesn't provide environmental stimulation or interaction? What if the caretaker doesn't watch the child for actions or doesn't interpret actions as responses? What if the caretaker doesn't feel reinforced because the child's responses are too inconsistent? What if the child is truly deprived of the ability to perceive or act due to some sensory or motor impairment?

In all of these situations there is a gap in the typical patterns of:

1. Environmental stimulation and caretaker-initiated interaction.
2. Child action and caretaker perception of action as a response.
3. Child reinforcement by caretaker and acquisition of purposeful gazing, gesturing, and verbal repertoires.
4. Caretaker perception of mutual interaction and hence reinforcement for interacting with and responding to the child.

The result of any of these gaps may be a language delay. McLean and Snyder-McLean (1978) state, "It is our contention that language acquisition reflects the effects of a complex set of transactions between the language learning child and his environment. This set of transactions involves those related to the development of the child's knowledge of the physical world and the social world. Further, we see this transaction as involving a complex reciprocal relationship between the child and a mature language user who is basic to the child's environment."

For the severely impaired and low-functioning child, it is advantageous to create an awareness in all involved "mature language users" of the need for and benefits of stimulation, assigned intention, and expected mutual interaction. Creating such awareness in all staff members, especially in institutional settings with high staff turnover, admittedly is a very difficult task. In one project conducted by Raack and Frey (1984), staff in private schools and residential settings were requested to list language models provided during various caretaking tasks. The staff had previously received in-service instruction primarily on prelinguistic development—not on how to model language or the importance of language models; yet the following was revealed from the study:

1. Length: Language models from the private schools tended to be lengthier and more complex than the residential schools, which probably reflected the current ability of the populations.
2. Appropriateness: The language model samples obtained appeared contextually appropriate to the caretaking event.
3. Variety: The sampling of language models also provided a variety of words including feelings, labeling, negation, greeting, and questions.

Following this project, staff expressed their increased awareness of available language models and context. When all staff were given in-service instruction on the information revealed by this procedure, including additional open discussion from the staff who were involved in the project, language models continued to increase in quality and quantity. These staff members demonstrated some internal awareness of how to provide language models of appropriate length, relevance, and variety.

But even when language is modeled appropriately during regular caretaking events, several other primary variables remain which also must be managed. One must be able to aid staff in stimulating each child to achieve maximum sensorimotor potential, and recognizing each child's unique method of responding, assigning communicative intent to each observable action, and expecting mutual interaction.

STIMULATION

Frequently clinical, educational, and institutional programs attempt to achieve specific goals in isolation. This may keep the environment so unnaturally limited that sensory stimulation becomes too structured and limited in scope. Listed below are the prelinguistic milestones, as described by Reichle and Yoder (1977). Also listed are traditional methods of goal achievement as they have been therapeutically employed by many educators and therapists. Following that list is another example listing natural methods of goal achievement which have been incorporated by many caretakers unknowingly in daily language learning situations.

Traditional Responses

1. Localization: Turning the head to the sound source of a bell
2. Tracking: Turning the head or eyes to follow an object or person
3. Line of regard: Eye contact and looking in the direction of the adult's gaze
4. Diverted gaze: Looking back and forth between objects or people
5. Imitation: Imitating sounds or gestures as presented by the therapist
6. Grasp and reach: Reaching for and holding a red ring
7. Follow and find: Grabbing an object or a mobile
8. Showing: "Show me a ball."
   Giving: "Give me the ball."
   Pointing: "Point to the ball."
9. Functional use of objects: Discussing a picture of a brush.

Natural Responses

1. Localization: May become turning to a familiar voice to see a special friend.
2. Tracking: May become following a plate of food.
3. Line of regard: May become finding a mutual friend entering a room.
4. Diverted gaze: May become choosing between a plate of food or a cup of milk for the first bites or sips of a meal.
5. Imitation: May be sharing laughter.
6. Grasp and reach: May be holding onto a caretaker's blouse.
7. Follow and find: May be sliding a cereal piece around on a tray.
8. Showing, giving, and pointing: May be picking up a washcloth in a tub of water, handing it to the caretaker, and pointing at the washcloth while the caretaker talks about the bath.
9. Functional use of objects: May be slipping a foot into a shoe.

In short, language models remain critical, but contextual stimulation remains primary for purposeful use of these "prelinguistic" tasks. In addition, stimulation should not only translate into using daily routines as opportunities for prelinguistic development; it also should include providing sensory motor involvement with objects and events. Stimulation should include learning from established routines as well as from the opportunity to experience something new or some change in the environment. Bloom and Lahey (1978) state:

> The development of language results from the interaction between the child and the context—specifically, the interaction among the child's changing needs and changing capacities, and the different situations in the environment. These interactions between the child and the context involve the processing of information whereby like events are related and generalizations are formed to be represented in memory . . . Information about objects and relations between objects are coded as schemas, and these schemas act to influence encounters with new and different events (assimilation and accommodation, in Piaget's terms). Thus, at the same time that children's attention determines what it is that they learn from the environment, the accumulation of experience in memory also influences and directs what they attend to.

Therefore, a context (for all language modeled, for all stimuli presented, and for all responses and tasks expected) remains primary to therapy for the severely involved individual.

ASSIGNING COMMUNICATIVE INTENT

Once we understand how the prelinguistic milestones may be elicited in caretaking, it is easy to observe how these actions may become interpreted as communicative repertoires or strategies. Gazing strategies for interaction may include visual attention, eye contact, tracking, line of regard, and diverted gazing if these behaviors occur within a context involving an object, person, or event. Gesturing strategies for communication may involve changes in muscle tone, facial expressions, grasping, reaching, following and finding, actions for the recurrence of a pleasurable event, showing, giving, pointing, and acting with objects. And vocal repertoires—including differentiated crying, vocalizing, babbling, imitating, echoing, and the child's first words—may be meaningful, but they can be the precursors to speech and language only if someone in the child's environment decides these repertoires are meaningful and responds to them.

Many severely handicapped children do not have the capacity for the same communication strategies that normal children have available to them. For this reason, caregivers need to be aware of each child's capacity for responses. For instance, a child who suddenly falls asleep may have been overstimulated rather than nonresponsive to stimuli or the method of stimulation. An extremely hypertonic child may pull back the lips into a square stiff "smile" to reject being touched while a well-meaning caretaker continues to stroke the child's arms lightly. When the child suddenly bursts into tears, the caretaker becomes confused and does not feel reinforced for attempting the interaction. And a child who does not localize to a bell but turns toward the kitchen when the metal dinner trays are being loaded may be either responding to only those sounds that are peripherally available, or perhaps the child has no reason to localize to a bell because someone has rung that same bell for head turning a hundred times, the child has seen it, and turning toward it one more time has no immediate meaning or importance. Once caretakers know each child's available response repertoires, they can more accurately assign communicative intent and feel more reinforced for interactive attempts with the child. When the caretaker believes the child is communicating, the child can become a communicator.

MUTUAL EXPECTATIONS OF INTERACTION

If one expects communication, one can receive communication from even the most severely involved child. Even "no response" can be interpreted as a response. For instance, a child who does not respond to someone's voice may be saying "I can't hear you" or "Who is this?" or "I'm exhausted" or "I'm sick and I don't care" or "If I ignore you, maybe you won't touch me. Please don't touch me." Knowing the child, the child's skills, and the child's deficits, while believing that the child is an interactive entity, leads one to the ability to appropriately assign communicative intent. The same rules of interaction should be used that one would use in communication with any individual.

1. Introduce yourself the first time you interact with the child. Reintroduce yourself every time you appear. "Hello. It's Cathy here. How are you today, Kenny? You look so handsome in your new wheelchair."

2. Give plenty of time for a response. Wait long enough to give the child time to take a conversational turn before you turn away.

3. Use a variety of language functions—greeting, polite forms, commenting, emoting (about how you feel as well as about how you think the child feels), requesting, questioning, describing, and all of the functions that you would use in any conversation with anyone. (Mothers do this with even the youngest of babies.)

4. Don't establish goals that require a child to change the content and function of a socially well-established form. For example, changing the content and function of a smile into a "yes" response to a question leaves the child totally unable to answer questions such as "Are you ready to go have oral surgery?" Even if the answer is "yes," who wants to smile at a question like that? If one takes a nonmeaningful form (such as looking up for "yes") and assigns intent and function to it, the child is more likely to achieve a socially functional and consistent method of alternative communication.

5. Use appropriate methods of prompting and redirecting a child. For example, pushing up the child's head should always be preceded with a warning and a reason. "Johnny, hold your head up to see this fun toy. I have something for you to see. (*Pause*) I'm going to help you. I'm going to push your head up. I'm going to touch your forehead. Up we go. Now look." If prompting is too intrusive, one risks shutting down the child. Consider that normal children turn away from eye contact when they have been involved in ongoing interaction or when they need more processing time. Mothers often wait or gently redirect. Rarely does a mother grab a chin for head turns or push a head up for attention because this is not natural nurturing interaction. One must apply respect and positive regard.

6. All available repertoires should be expanded into forms with content and function. It is not necessary or beneficial to eliminate repertoires unless they are negative compensatory neuromuscular responses. For example, eliminating socially inappropriate vocalizing does not seem as therapeutically beneficial or appropriate as shaping the vocalizations into a form for a new function or content.

7. Provide activities for the child to respond to and communicate about. This also gives the caretaker a context for interaction with the child other than the daily routine. Everyone is less likely to burn out, especially if the activities remain meaningful, relevant, environmentally appropriate, and fun.

3
Language Groups for Prelinguistic Children

Nothing is more terrible than an activity without insight.
Thomas Carlyle

The language group paradigm presented in *EXCELL* is designed to consider neurological, sensory, motor, environmental, and communicative needs. Because the needs of the prelinguistic are so intense, the therapeutic avenue must be holistic enough to incorporate as many therapeutic principles as possible, and the follow-through must be ongoing enough to involve as many caretakers and educational staff as are willing. The therapeutic needs, the therapeutic principles, and the ongoing consultation or training—all are woven into the design of this language group paradigm.

THEMATIC CONTEXTUALIZATION

Each language group experience centers around a theme. The first set of language group experiences demonstrates object themes. Each theme is based on a concrete noun which can be experienced through the senses and acted upon motorically in a purposeful and relevant activity. The second set of language group experiences demonstrates event themes. Each event focuses on similar actions which can be experienced through the senses and enacted through objects. This approach reflects the postulation that all language and stimuli that are presented to the child should be in a context of some thing or event which is mutually shared and significant to the child. The child's attention should be on or directed to the object or event, and language should be modeled pertaining to what the child may be perceiving or experiencing. The child's gazing, gesturing, and vocalizing also should be labeled and responded to with deference to context in content and function.

The theme should be presented not only in the context of meaningful language, but also in a concrete form (the actual object) as well as in an abstract form (a symbol such as a picture, a song, or both). The theme must provide a sensory experience utilizing as many of the modalities as possible (sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste). Consistent with the concept of holistic and multisensory stimulation, some of the auditory/language stimulation should occur in a simple song based on the theme, the context, and the group activities. An atmosphere of fun is often promoted for everyone by expressing the theme through music. Each language group experience has a "theme song," which is sung at the beginning of the group experience and again with each child at the end. The cheerful songs also seem to carry over as future language models. The children in these groups often are much more responsive to music than to other forms of interaction. The songs are constructed to deliver models symbolizing the theme of each language group experience.

Thematic contextualization provides a motivating context for language modeling within a communicative exchange. Through thematic contextualization, positive mutual interaction may be facilitated. Thematic contextualization is necessary for:

1. The facilitation of basic sensory and motor awareness.
2. The development of concepts, such as the properties of an object which the child must be able to attend to and incorporate into a schema before spontaneous labeling of an object can occur.
3. The provision of a specific context in which various semantic relationships can appear in the language models. See Bloom and Lahey (1978) on context, form, and use; and Brown (1973) on early stages.

For example, one may choose apples as a theme. Contextual activities may include tasting and smelling apple yogurt and pieces of an apple or apple juice, feeling the texture of apple peels and pulp, visually attending to a bright red apple, picking apples wired to a tree branch, singing a song about sitting under an apple tree while an apple tree branch is held over the child's head, and taping laminated pictures of apples to a picture of a tree. In short, the theme (a concrete noun) and the context (language models based on sensory and motor activities centered around the theme) serve to facilitate cognitive and linguistic development.

When choosing a theme and designing the context in which it will be presented, one must consider stimulating as many of the senses as possible, facilitating purposeful prelinguistic motor events (see Reichle and Yoder 1977), and developing that which is environmentally relevant and age appropriate.

ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

Each child should take a turn being actively involved with the object and the individual who is presenting the object. Active participation allows for real objects to be experienced through the senses and for real events to be motorically enacted while taking turns with the adult and within the group. Children's first words typically represent what they can do or want to do as well as what they want others to do (Bloom and Lahey 1978). This indicates the need to help the prelinguistic or multihandicapped child in actively participating in early actions and object relations as a nonlinguistic antecedent to verbal communication. Sensory and motor interaction with objects, people, and events also is consistent with Piaget's learning theories. Muma (1978) summarizes, "The sensorimotor stage is marked by learning through doing." Active participation with objects also has been found to facilitate language better than pictorial representations in the severely/profoundly retarded (Spiegel 1983). Bloom and Lahey (1978) state that "the result of acting on things and with things, putting them here and putting them there, is that infants are able to see things in relation to one another and in relation to their own actions." The mental schemes that underlie infants' actions are repeatedly reorganized in the process. Through such reorganized schemes, infants learn about relations among objects and, ultimately, the distinction between the actor and object that is acted on (Gratch 1975).

SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATION

According to Piaget, representational thought emerges as sensorimotor schemas broaden. In a well-rounded, totally holistic language group paradigm, one must include a symbolic representation of the theme. This works toward facilitating symbolic awareness, and it may help some children to develop an alternative communication system. Active participation with the symbol, such as a picture, may be incorporated into the group activity. For some children and caretakers, certain language group songs may even be acknowledged as symbols of objects, events, or relationships being explored.

DYADIC INTERACTION

Inherent in this term is the concept of two individuals interacting with mutual expectations of input and response to the interaction. In research with children of normal intelligence, Bondurant, Romeo, and Kretschmer (1983) found that the mothers of children with language delays used twice as many rejection utterances as the mothers of children with normal language development. The mothers of children with normal language generally were more accepting of their children's attempts to communicate. The adult's continuous acceptance of communicative attempts by the prelinguistic becomes extremely important in developing communicative repertoires. Each educator and caretaker needs to be aware of how important it is to assign communicative intent to every gazing pattern (any eye blink or ocular movement), every motor response (any twitch, jerk, or change in muscle tone), and every verbal output (any sound produced). If truly no response is noted, then "no response" should be perceived as the response. Learning to assign communicative intent can reduce frustration by the caretaker or educator pertaining to what is often perceived as "variable performance." This type of mutual respect, expectation to be equally interactive, and assignment of communicative intent lends itself to establishing a more positive interaction with all the natural reinforcers of normal communication.

In short, one should expand the concept of communicative intent into the concept of dyadic interaction. This philosophy can be carried into the language group while demonstrating to staff and caretakers, first, how to employ appropriate language models; and second, how to choose and present stimuli. As a result, staff and caretakers will feel more reinforced and the goals of the language groups will be more quickly achieved. Periodically assisting staff with their methods of keeping data on the language groups helps to focus their attention on these issues.

The reproducible recordkeeping form on the following page is designed specifically to train staff members in methods of perceiving responses as well as understanding the goals and purposes of the group. Two samples are given on pages 30-31. Sample #1 represents the performance of J., whose behavior we have examined previously (see Sample Speech and Language Report, pages 13-15). Sample #2 represents the performance of a child with less cognitive ability than J.

RECORDKEEPING SHEET

Name _____ Date _____

Group _____ Recordkeeper _____

Code:
+ = Demonstrated the task (without a doubt)
— = Did not demonstrate the task
? = Unsure of level of response
NA = Task not appropriate for this particular group experience or client

---

Demonstrated awareness of:

the object _____ the symbol _____ the word _____ the song _____

Sensory awareness:

visual _____ auditory _____ tactile _____ taste _____ olfactory _____

Demonstrated awareness of hands and objects in hands _____

Demonstrated:

prolonged attention _____ participation _____ imitation _____

anticipation _____ initiation _____

Demonstrated fine motor control through:

assisted reach _____ or voluntary reach _____

assisted grasp _____ or voluntary grasp _____

Object manipulation for adult attention (banging, throwing, dropping, etc.) _____

_____

Object manipulation per object function _____

Gazing repertoires _____

_____

Gesturing repertoires _____

_____

Vocalizing repertoires _____

_____

Data for other individual goals: _____

_____

_____

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4
The Language Group Experience—Procedure and Example

In this chapter the group procedure is discussed and an example of each step is given, using the Carrot language group experience for the demonstration. This section may be particularly helpful to the therapist who must train others in how to implement the seventy lesson plans that follow.

Each language group centers around a concrete noun or event which can be experienced through as many sensory modalities as possible—sight, hearing, touch, smell, taste; and which can be enacted motorically in a purposeful and relevant activity. The theme and the activities centered around it are environmentally and age appropriate. All students participate in each step through the assistance of an aide, a teacher, or a therapist who also provides positive mutual interaction.

Each group member participates in the sensory experience before anyone begins the active participation task, and each group member completes the activity participation task before the symbolic representation task is initiated with the other group members.

Each step in the task is done with each child in the group. Repetition and turn taking are appropriate for this population, so it is not "lost therapy time" for the other children while one child is taking a turn. During the activity, the more alert children may be encouraged to visually follow around the circle or to assist.

The children are challenged to their maximum sensorimotor potential during their turn with each task. For some children, total assistance or guided assistance may be necessary for the more difficult motor tasks. Allow those children plenty of time to attempt the task independently, but don't allow their limitations to prohibit them from participating motorically in the event. Each task is discussed with each child during the individual turn. Meaning is assigned to every response. A variety of linguistic forms, functions, and content is presented.

During the language group experience, staff members are involved in recordkeeping. Data should be taken during each language group (at the least, during every three groups). Recording data together reinforces the purposes of the group and points out the various response repertoires of each child. In addition, staff members become more aware of the most successful presentation methods and the characteristics of those stimuli which appear most salient for each child.

EXAMPLE—CARROTS

1. All children are sitting up in their chairs, well supported and correctly aligned.

2. The children are either positioned in a circle in their wheelchairs with their trays, or seated around a shared table or work station.

3. The primary instructor or therapist begins the group by standing in the center of the circle and telling the teacher, aides, and children what everyone is going to do in this group. The instructor tells the sequence in steps, carefully stating first, second, and third.

   "I have some carrots. I have some carrots in my hand! This is what we are going to do with the carrots."

   "First, we will look at the carrots. We will smell the carrots. We will touch the carrot's green top, and then we will touch the carrot's orange bottom. Then we will taste some carrots. We will eat some mashed carrots, and we will drink some carrot juice."

   "This is the second thing we will do with the carrots. I will walk around the circle and show everyone my pail of dirt. It has carrots growing in it! Everyone will have a chance to pull up a carrot from my pail of dirt!"

   "This is the third thing we will do. I will give everyone a picture of a carrot. We will color the top of the carrot green, and then we will color the bottom of the carrot orange. We will glue some carrot tops on our picture. Then we will hang the pictures on the bulletin board, so we can look at them all day long!"

4. The theme song is sung, cuing the beginning of the language group activity.

   "This is a song about carrots!" (Instructor, teacher, and aides sing "The Carrot Song" to the tune of "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean.")

   My carrots have tops that are leafy.
   The orange part grows under the ground.
   I'll reach down and pull up a carrot!
   Just look at the carrot I found!
   Eat up, eat up,
   Oh, eat up some carrots with me, with me!
   Eat up, eat up,
   Oh, eat up some carrots with me!

5. The object is experienced through as many of the senses as possible. This facilitates basic sensory and motor awareness and develops concepts about the object which the child must be able to incorporate into meaningful information before language can emerge.

   If the teacher has several assistants, the sensory tasks can be done one-on-one with the children simultaneously.

   Some children cannot perform the task themselves, and those children are encouraged to adapt their sensory abilities to experience the task as someone else does it. For example, a child who is very rigid with severe contractures in the arms may feel the vibration of the spoon hitting the side of the bowl or listen to the sound while the teacher does the stirring. In this way every child sensorily experiences the object, but the instructor prompts those with motor limitations to attend to the sensory aspects of the motor task.

Each child is given an opportunity to:

Visually examine a carrot, tracking it from the top to the bottom.

Smell and touch the green top and orange bottom of a carrot.

Taste some cooked, mashed carrot.

Taste some carrot juice.

6. After each child has completed the sensory experience, the active participation (motor) task is introduced.

   The purpose of the motor task is to perform an activity that relates to the object, so that the child has an opportunity to further develop concepts about the object. This facilitates language because children's first words typically represent what they can do or want to do as well as what they want others to do.

   Children learn through motorically acting upon objects. Although the aides are available, the children are encouraged to perform the task with minimal assistance.

   "Pull up a carrot by its top out of a pail of dirt." Assist the child as needed.

   It is important to take time for the child to attempt as many motor tasks as possible. Other motor tasks the child may be encouraged to perform are reaching, touching, exploring, grasping and releasing, manipulating, showing, giving and taking, or pointing.

7. After each child has completed the active participation task, the symbolic representation task is introduced.

   Language is a symbol system, and thought processes are based on the ability to make some generalizations or abstractions about the world. Children relate to objects first, and then they develop the ability to relate to pictures as representations of objects. For this reason, a picture of the object is presented and some active participation with the picture may be incorporated into the group.

   Present the picture of the object and attempt to divert the child's gaze through pointing to the object or parts of the object. You may want to make parts of the picture tactile for exploration or two-dimensional for visual attention or scented for olfactory stimulation. Attempt to establish visual attention before directing the other sensory stimuli to the picture.

   "Color the carrot tops green and the bottom orange. Glue some artificial grass on the tips of the carrot tops."

8. Going around the language group, the instructor, teacher, and aides sing the theme song again, this time with each child.

9. The instructor summarizes the language group experience.

   "Now we know about carrots. First, we looked at carrots, and we smelled them. We touched their curly green tops and their orange bottoms. We tasted mashed carrots and carrot juice. Second, we pulled up carrots from the dirt where they grow. Third, we colored a picture of a carrot. We colored the bottom of the carrot orange and we colored the top of the carrot green. Then we hung our carrot pictures on the board. See how pretty they all look! We sang 'The Carrot Song,' and now we're finished with the carrot group."

SAMPLE #1

This data sheet represents the performance of J., the individual observed in the sample Speech and Language Report (pages 13–15).

RECORDKEEPING SHEET

Name J. Date 1-13-XX

Group Carrots Recordkeeper C. B. Raack

Code:
+ = Demonstrated the task (without a doubt)
— = Did not demonstrate the task
? = Unsure of level of response
NA = Task not appropriate for this particular group, experience or client

Demonstrated awareness of:

the object + the symbol ? (Diverted gaze but showed some awareness) the word — the song + (Laughed at song)

Sensory awareness: Responded to all

visual + auditory + tactile + taste + olfactory +

Demonstrated awareness of hands and objects in hands + Looked at carrots while in his hand

Demonstrated: (watched others)

prolonged attention + participation + imitation +

anticipation + (Became excited) initiation + (Attempted tasks immediately)

Demonstrated fine motor control through:

assisted reach NA or voluntary reach +

assisted grasp + or voluntary grasp NA

Object manipulation for adult attention (banging, throwing, dropping, etc.) NA

Object manipulation per object function +

Gazing repertoires Gazed at object and others

Gesturing repertoires Appropriate facial expressions

Vocalizing repertoires Laughter; vocalizing in anticipation of his turn; cried when Group ended

Data for other individual goals: (1) object manipulation continues to need guidance. (2) Continue to discuss the object and purpose of tasks. (3) Continue to explore ability to use pictures to identify object.

SAMPLE #2

This data sheet represents the performance of a lower-functioning individual, a child with less cognitive ability than J.

RECORDKEEPING SHEET

Name L. Date 1-13-XX

Group Carrots Recordkeeper C. B. Rasch

Code:
+ = Demonstrated the task (without a doubt)
— = Did not demonstrate the task
? = Unsure of level of response
NA = Task not appropriate for this particular group experience or client

Demonstrated awareness of:

the object + the symbol — the word ? the song + vocalized, smiled

Sensory awareness: Did not appear to enjoy feeling texture of carrot tops

visual + auditory + tactile + taste + olfactory +

Demonstrated awareness of hands and objects in hands — Seemed to "shut down" when assisted in holding carrots

Demonstrated: attended longer than usual

prolonged attention + participation + imitation + vocalized throughout song

anticipation — initiation —

Demonstrated fine motor control through:

assisted reach + or voluntary reach NA

assisted grasp + or voluntary grasp NA

Tolerated assistance at reaching & grasping but motorically unable to voluntarily perform these tasks

Object manipulation for adult attention (banging, throwing, dropping, etc.) NA

Object manipulation per object function NA

Gazing repertoires Looked at people, objects. Prompted gaze at picture. Did not look at hands.

Gesturing repertoires Facial expression. Demonstrated excitement through changes in muscle tone.

Vocalizing repertoires Vocalized w/pleasure during song. Appeared aware of appropriateness at continuous vocalizing.

Data for other individual goals: (1) Expand gazing skills (2) Reinforce vocalizing and attempt to shape prosodic imitation

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PART 2

Language Group Experiences in Context

Watermelon

Context:

Experiencing a watermelon
Serving watermelon to one another
Picking out the seeds

Content/Target vocabulary:

watermelon, knife, plate, seeds
feel, smell, taste, look, listen
take, give, pick out, eat, color
big, heavy, green, striped, pink, watery, sticky
on, open

Shopping list:

a watermelon

Other materials:

a kitchen knife
newspaper
a large paper plate for each child
green, pink, and black markers
scissors
a doll

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the children the big, heavy watermelon. Encourage them to feel and smell the watermelon before it is cut open. Prompt them to watch while the teacher covers the table with newspaper and cuts open the watermelon. Show each child the inside of the watermelon and all of the juice on the newspaper. Allow the children to put their fingers in the watermelon juice and lick it off their fingers. Cut the watermelon into pie-shaped pieces. Assist the children in looking at the cut-up watermelon.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle and assist each child in choosing a piece of watermelon. Ask the child to give that piece to the next child so each child has given a piece of watermelon to a friend. Then assist each child in picking out the seeds from the watermelon piece. Have the child hand you the seeds. Assist the child in eating the watermelon.

Symbolic Representation

Wipe the work area clean. Give each child a paper plate. Assist the children in coloring the plates like watermelons. Cut the round watermelon plates into wedges. Have the children take turns giving each other "pieces of watermelon." Have each child give the doll "a piece of watermelon," shaping the paper plate pieces to fit together to form a whole in front of the doll. Display the doll and the watermelon shape for the rest of the day. Discuss the watermelon language group activities.

Sing "The Watermelon Song" (to the tune of "Camptown Races"):

Watermelons in this song.
Watermelon!
Watermelons grow real long,
Oh, watermelon day.
Going to eat all night, going to eat all day.
Going to eat some watermelon.
Oh, watermelon day.

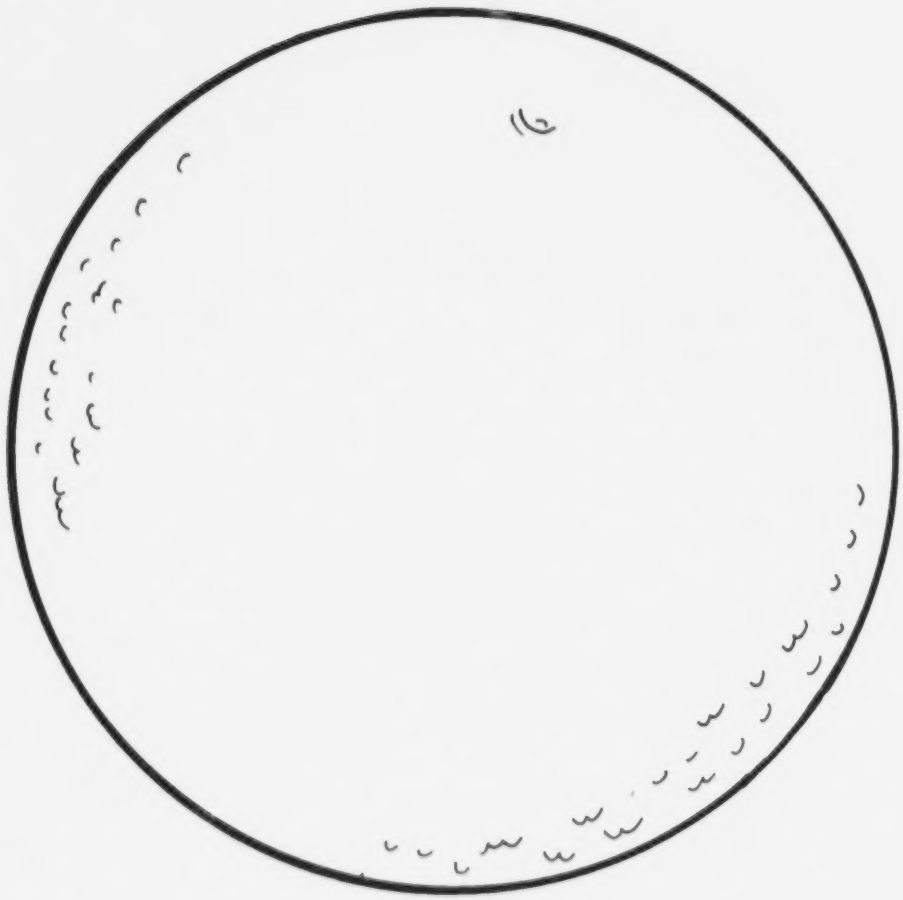
Caution:

Be sure the children do not eat the watermelon seeds or rind.

Consultations:

Discuss hand function and grasping abilities with the occupational therapist to learn how to better prompt the pincer grasp necessary for picking out the watermelon seeds.

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to watermelon.



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Oranges and Orange Juice

Context:

Experiencing an orange
Making orange juice

Content/Target vocabulary:

orange, juice, peel, seeds, pitcher, water, glass, spoon
look, smell, watch, feel, taste
roll, peel, squeeze, stir, pour, drink, wipe
orange (color), sticky, sweet, sour, strong, good
on, in

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of an orange (one copy for each child).

Shopping list:

oranges (one for every two children in the group)
orange juice concentrate in a can

Other materials:

a pitcher
a large spoon
water
orange crayons

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the children an orange. Assist them in feeling and smelling the orange. Label each child's responses. Roll the orange on each child's tray or table, and assist each child in participating or watching according to the child's ability. Ask the child to give the orange back to you. Go around the language group again and assist each child in peeling some of the orange. Have the child feel the peeled and unpeeled portion of the orange to compare the textures. Label the child's responses.

Active Participation

Help the children in dividing the orange to share between two children. Encourage them to squeeze the orange pieces to make juice, and assist them in finding the seeds. (See Caution, below.) Then clean up their work areas and hands. Tell the children, "Now we're going to make orange juice." Encourage them to watch as the teacher prepares the juice. Ask the teacher to discuss the following while making the juice:

"Pour the strong orange juice in the pitcher."
"Pour the water into the pitcher."
"Stir the orange juice and water to make good juice."

Go around the circle and have each child help make the juice by stirring. Assist the children in drinking the juice, and tell them, "Let's all drink the good orange juice."

Symbolic Representation

Go around the language group and assist the children in diverting their gaze between an orange and the orange juice can by asking them, "Where's the orange and where is the orange juice?" Go around the language group again, giving each child a picture of an orange and an orange crayon. Assist the children in coloring their pictures. Go around the group and assist the children in looking at the orange, the picture of the orange, and the orange juice can.

Sing "The Orange Song" (to the tune of "Skip to my Lou"):

Seeds in my orange juice, what'll I do?
Seeds in my orange juice, what'll I do?
Seeds in my orange juice, what'll I do?
Take out the seeds, my darling.
Peel, peel, peel my orange.
Squeeze, squeeze, squeeze out the juice.
Drink, drink, drink all the juice.
But take out the seeds, my darling.

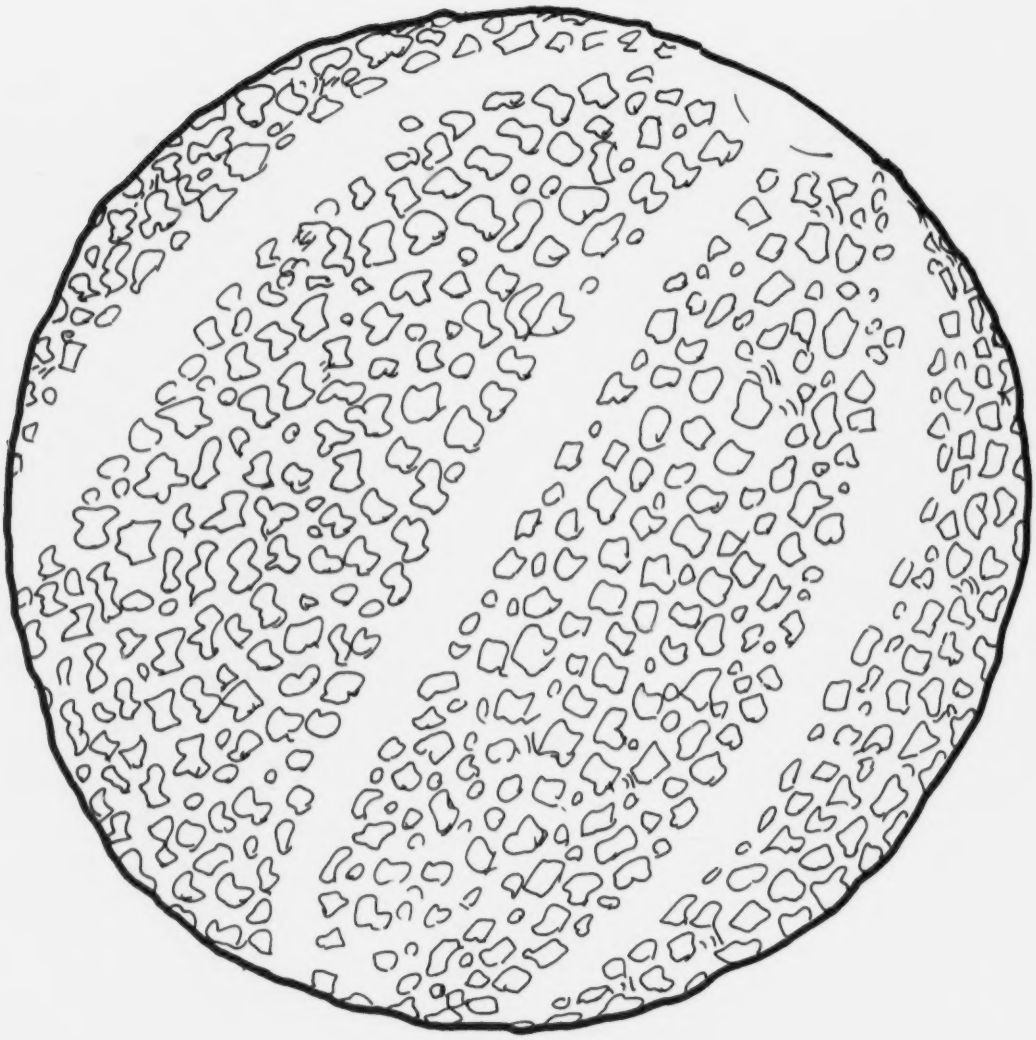
Caution:

Watch the children closely while they eat the oranges and experience the orange peel. Take away the seeds to avoid the possibility of any child choking on a seed.

Consultations:

Consult medical staff or the occupational therapist to assure that the children are capable of chewing and swallowing an orange.

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to oranges.



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Cantaloupe

Context:

Experiencing a cantaloupe
Scooping out the seeds

Content/Target vocabulary:

cantaloupe, seed, rind, knife, spoon, plates, vine, tape, scissors
feel, smell, taste, watch, look
cut, scoop, eat, put, hang
orange (color), soft, rough, sweet, juicy
on, open

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a cantaloupe (one copy for each child).

Shopping list:

a cantaloupe
green crepe paper strips

Other materials:

a kitchen knife
a large scooping spoon
newspaper
a plate for each child
scissors
tape

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the children a cantaloupe. Encourage them to smell and feel the melon.

Active Participation

Encourage the children to watch while an adult cuts open the cantaloupe on the newspaper. Show the children the inside of the cantaloupe, and have the children assist in scooping out some of the seeds in the center. Allow the children to put the seeds in their work area to play with and feel. (Watch that the children do not put the cantaloupe seeds in their mouths.) Then go around the group and assist each child in tasting some of the cantaloupe. After the children have tasted the cantaloupe, allow them to look at and feel the rind. Compare the feel of the seeds, the inside of the cantaloupe, and the rind. Discuss each child's reactions to the different textures and to the taste of the cantaloupe.

Symbolic Representation

Tape green crepe paper strips on the wall or bulletin board. Give each child a picture of a cantaloupe, and assist in cutting out the picture. Then assist in putting tape on the cutout cantaloupe and hanging it on the crepe paper vine. Summarize the language group activities by saying, "We cut open the cantaloupe, scooped out the seeds, ate some cantaloupe, cut out a cantaloupe picture, put tape on the picture of the cantaloupe, and hung the cantaloupe picture on the vine."

Sing "The Cantaloupe Song" (to the tune of "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot"):

Open up, sweet cantaloupe,
Open for to scrape out the seeds.
Open up, sweet cantaloupe,
Open for to scrape out the seeds.
I looked in the classroom and what did I see
Open for to scrape out the seeds?
A group of teachers cutting one for me,
Open for to scrape out the seeds.

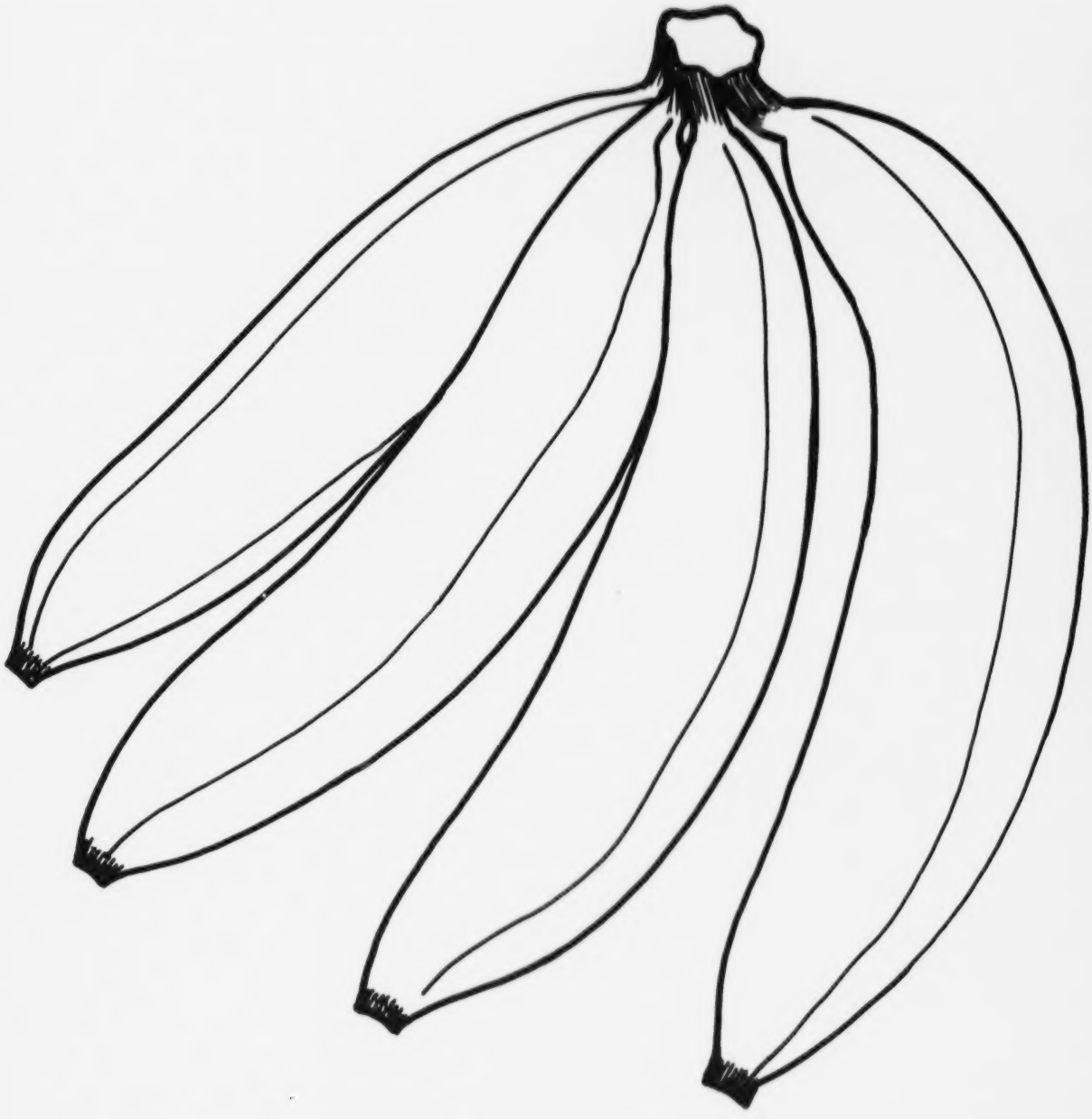
Caution:

Be careful that the children do not put the cantaloupe seeds or rind in their mouths. Mash the cantaloupe for the children who are on blended or pureed diets.

Consultations:

Consult with the occupational therapist or teachers to determine which children can independently hold the spoon and scoop out the seeds and which children will need minimal guidance, which children will need total prompting, or which children will need total assistance in completing this task. Children who cannot do the task due to hand contractures or deformities can be verbally prompted to watch while a teacher performs the task in front of them and while the other classmates perform the task.

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to cantaloupe.



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Bananas

Context:

Experiencing a banana
Peeling a banana
Making banana pudding

Content/Target vocabulary:

banana, peel, pudding, milk, bowl, spoon
smell, feel, taste, look
touch, grab, pull, peel, pour, stir
yellow, sweet, soft
off, in, on

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a bunch of bananas (one copy for each child).

Shopping list:

a bunch of bananas
a box of pudding mix and ingredients

Other materials:

a glass mixing bowl
a mixing spoon
a spoon and a bowl for each child
a slicing knife
yellow crayons

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the children a bunch of bananas. Assist each child in pulling a banana from the bunch. Assist each child in peeling the banana. Discuss the feel of the peels and the fruit inside. Have the children smell the banana. Break each child's banana in half. Save one of the halves for the banana pudding, and let the children taste the other half. Encourage the children to watch as a teacher slices a banana. Discuss each child's reaction to the smell, taste, and feel of the banana.

Active Participation

Encourage each of the children to watch as the teacher mixes the ingredients for the banana pudding. Have each child participate in stirring the pudding. Direct their attention to the banana lumps within the mixture. Encourage them to listen to the sound of the spoon hitting the side of the bowl. Discuss the creamy texture of banana pudding. Have each child assist in spooning some of the pudding into a bowl. Encourage the child to watch as you slice the banana half on top of the pudding. Put each child's bowl into the refrigerator and let the pudding cool while the group completes the symbolic representation task. (If you don't have access to a refrigerator, the pudding may be eaten at room temperature before the symbolic representation task is initiated.)

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a picture of a bunch of bananas. Assist the children in coloring the pictures. Hang the banana pictures around the room, and discuss the language group events throughout the day.

Sing "The Banana Song" (to the tune of "Oh, Susannah"):

Oh, I came from Guatemala
With bananas in a bunch.
I'm a-going to Louisiana
With my bananas for my lunch.
O banana,
Yellow peel I see.
Oh, I came from Guatemala
With bananas from a tree.

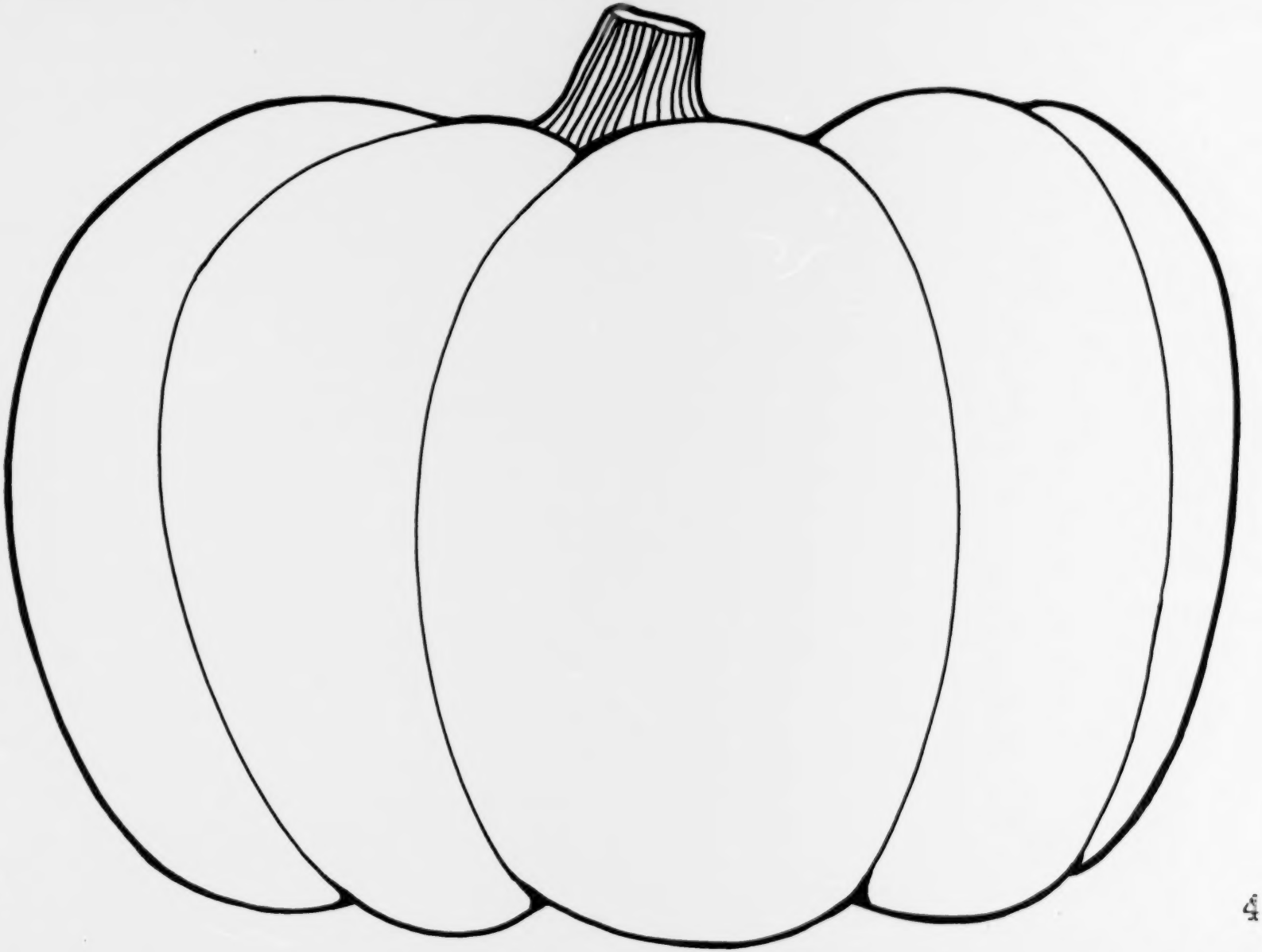
Caution:

Prevent the children from attempting to eat banana peels.

Consultations:

Tactile-defensive children may have difficulty handling this task. You may want to consult with the occupational therapist for advice.

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to milk or bananas.



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Pumpkin

Context:

Experiencing a pumpkin
Making a jack-o'-lantern
Making a pumpkin pie

Content/Target vocabulary:

pumpkin, seeds, pan, pie, crust, knife, plates, spoon, forks, face
feel, smell, look, taste
reach, grab, pull out, drop, carve, cut out, mix, pour, taste
orange (color), gooey, messy, round
in, out, on

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a pumpkin (one copy for each child).

Shopping list:

a pumpkin
instant pumpkin pie mix and ingredients
a baked pie crust

Other materials:

a sharp knife
a scooping spoon
a dishpan
a glass bowl
a mixing bowl
a stirring spoon
a plate and fork or spoon for each child
black crayons

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the children a pumpkin. Encourage each child to take a turn feeling and smelling the pumpkin. Have the children watch as the teacher cuts the top of the pumpkin and scoops out the seeds. Put the pumpkin in a dishpan, go around the circle again, and have each child reach into the pumpkin, pull out some of the pulp, and drop it into the dishpan. Discuss each child's reaction to the feel of the pulp. Encourage the children to smell the texture and to tactilely explore the pumpkin pulp. Encourage the children to watch while the teacher goes around the language group circle cutting out eyes, nose, and mouth of a jack-o'-lantern. Put some of the pumpkin pulp into the bowl and set it aside while the children assist in cleaning up their hands, faces, and desks.

Active Participation

Go around the circle and assist the children in mixing the ingredients to make a pumpkin pie. Have each child gaze at the pie filling and then at the dish of pumpkin pulp. Explain that the filling is made out of the insides of the pumpkin. Have the children watch and assist in pouring the pie filling into the baked crust. Taste and enjoy the pie while verbally sharing the pumpkin experience.

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a picture of a pumpkin. Help the children make a jack-o'-lantern face on the pumpkin with the black crayon.

Sing "The Pumpkin Song" (to the tune of "Skip to My Lou"):

Pumpkin, don't you bother me,
Pumpkin, don't you bother me,
Pumpkin don't you bother me.
We carved a jack-o'-lantern.

Caution:

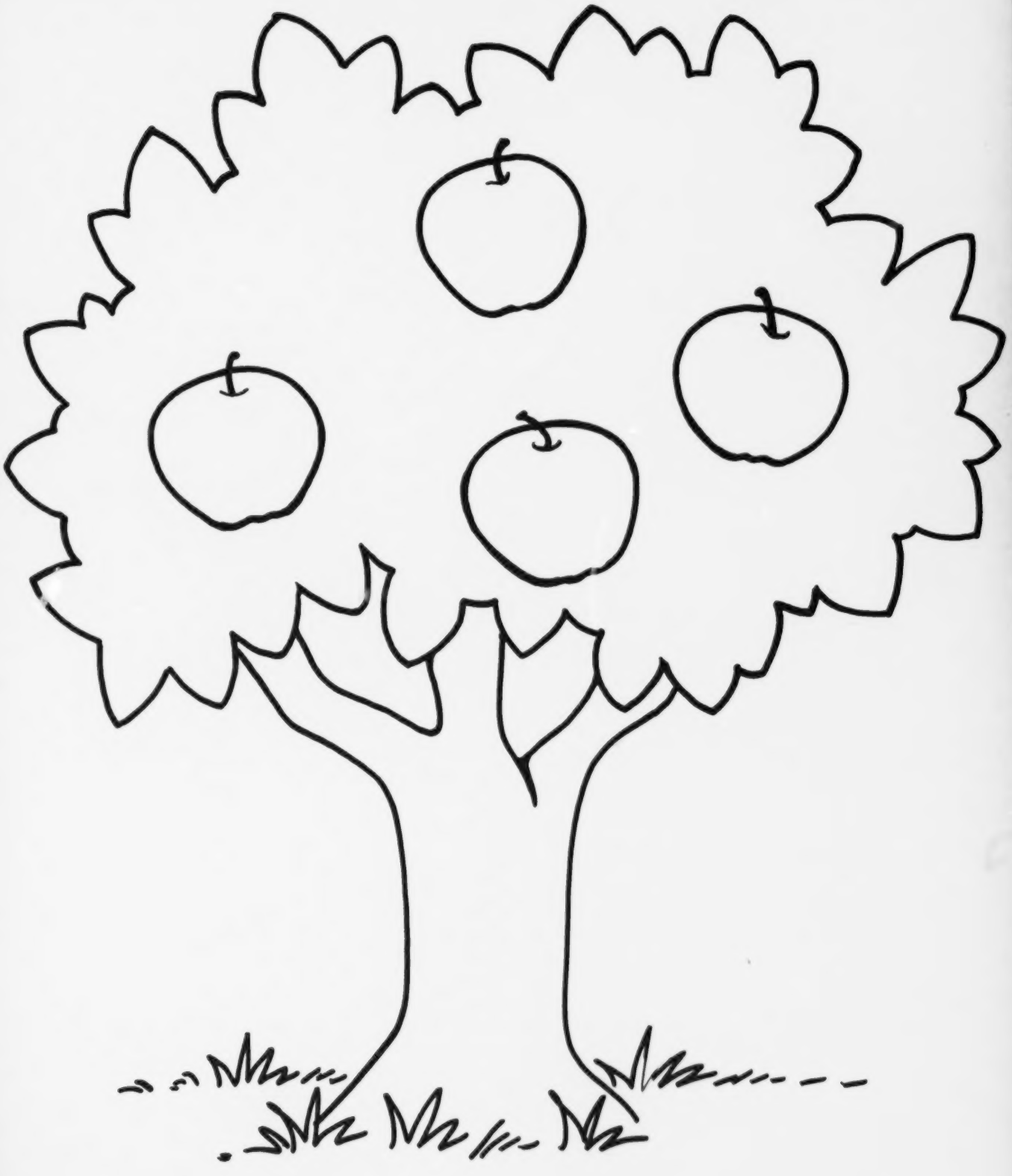
Use extra care when using or putting down the carving knife.

Be sure the children don't put pumpkin seeds in their mouths.

Consultations:

Consult with the occupational therapist for advice on handling children who have tactile defensiveness.

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to pumpkin.



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Apples

Context:

Experiencing apples
Picking apples

Content/Target vocabulary:

apples, tree, apple juice, apple yogurt
listen, look, feel, taste, smell
reach, pick, pull, eat, drink
red, round, juice, sweet
on, off

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of an apple tree (one copy for each child).

Bring in a large branch from an apple tree. Wire apples to it (one apple for each child).

Shopping list:

apples
apple juice
apple yogurt

Other materials:

a cup and spoon for each child
red crayons

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show each child an apple. Discuss how it shines and feels and smells. Roll the apple on each child's wheelchair tray or work station. Encourage each child to engage in give-and-take and to hold up the apple to show the other children. Go around the language group circle again and let each child taste some apple juice and some apple yogurt. Assign communicative intent to each child's responses to the taste and texture of the apple juice and the apple yogurt.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle and hold the branch with the apples wired to it over each child's head. (The instructor may want to stand behind the child with an aide standing in front of the child.) Assign communicative intent to each child's reactions to the apple tree branch. Encourage each child to reach up and pick an apple from the tree. If the child is physically unable to pull the apple from the tree, encourage touching or gazing at the apple. Assign communicative intent to each child's reaction.

Symbolic Representation

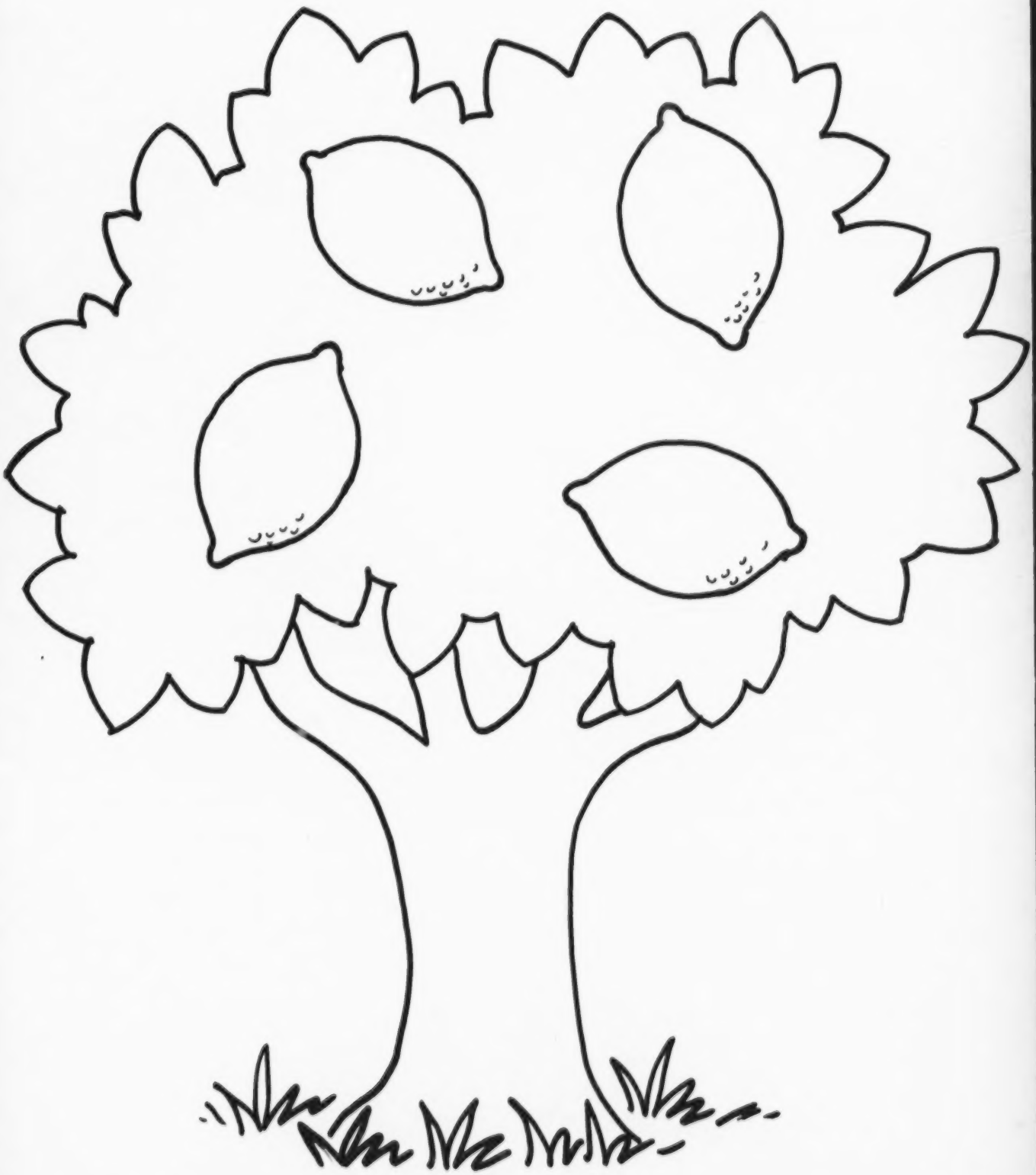
Give each child a picture of an apple tree. Encourage the child to find all the apples on the tree, and assist the child in coloring them. Hang the pictures around the room, and discuss the language group events throughout the day.

Sing "The Apple Song" (to the World War II tune, "Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree with Anyone Else But Me"):

Let's sit under the apple tree,
(*Child's name*) and me,
(*Child's name*) and me, (*child's name*) and me.
Let's sit under the apple tree,
(*Child's name*) and me,
And we'll drink apple juice!

Consultation:

Check with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to apples or yogurt.



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Limes

Context:

Experiencing a lime
Making a lime drink

Content/Target vocabulary:

lime, glass, sherbet, limeade
taste, smell, feel, look, listen
squeeze, mix, drink
sour, green, hard, round, cold
in, out

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of limes growing on the tree (one copy for each child).

Cut one lime into slices.

Shopping list:

two fresh limes
two plastic limes filled with juice
sugar-free lemon-lime soda pop (one can for every six children)
lime sherbet

Other materials:

a glass for each child
an ice-cream scoop
stirring spoons
lime-colored crayons
string

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the children the uncut lime and the lime slices. Allow the children to smell and taste the lime. Allow the children to feel the texture of the inside of the lime and the rind. Encourage the children to divert their gaze between the lime and the slices of lime. Assign communicative intent to each child's responses.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle and show the children the whole lime and the plastic lime. Give each child a small glass of soda pop and ask them to squeeze some juice from the plastic lime into the pop. Then have each child assist in putting a scoop of lime sherbet into the pop. Stir and assist each child in stirring the limeade and drinking it. After drinking the limeade, discuss how the limeade was made with lime juice. Discuss each child's responses to the limeade.

Symbolic Representation

Encourage the children to divert their gaze between the lime and the plastic lime. Give each child a picture of the lime tree, and assist them in coloring the limes on the tree. Hang the pictures around the room. Tie string around the tops of the plastic limes, under the plastic cap. Hang the plastic limes near the pictures. Sing "The Lime Song" (to the tune of "Where Has My Little Dog Gone?"):

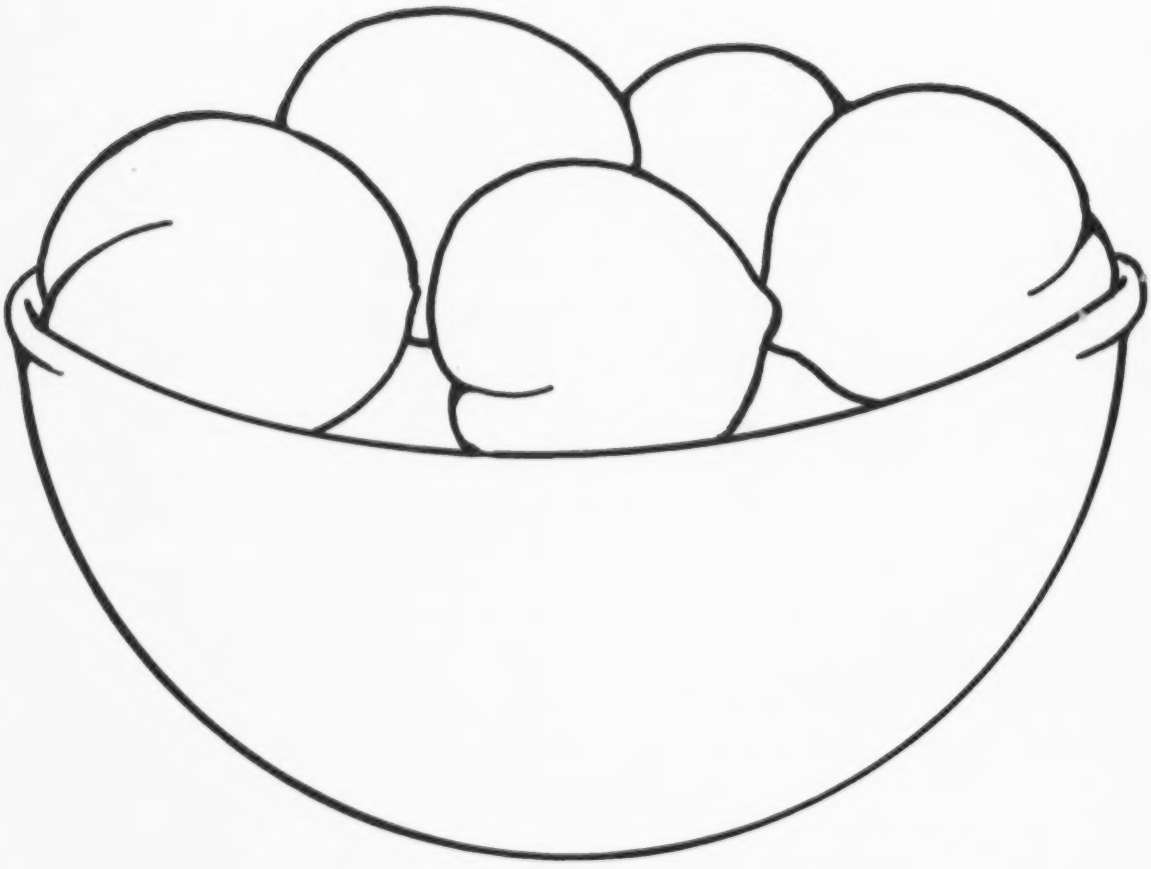
Oh, where, oh where has my little lime gone?
Oh, where, oh where can it be?
It's a lime so sour, it's a lime so green.
Oh, I could drink two or three!

Caution:

Be careful with the cold drink, remembering that some children may be sensitive to the extreme temperature.

Consultation:

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to limes or any ingredients in sherbet or sugar-free soda pop.



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Peaches

Context:

Experiencing a peach
Making a peach dessert

Content/Target vocabulary:

peaches, peeling, spoon, knife, blender, bowl, yogurt
listen, look, smell, taste, feel
peel, roll, scoop, blend, mix
fuzzy, soft, creamy, sweet
in, on, out

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a bowl of peaches (one copy for each child).

Shopping list:

fresh peaches
peach nectar
plain yogurt

Other materials:

an electric blender
a paring knife
a scooping spoon
a cup, bowl, and spoon for each child
yellow and orange crayons

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the children a peach. Assist the children in experiencing the peach. Encourage them to feel and smell the peach. Roll the peach on each child's wheelchair tray or work station. Show them how you can squeeze the peach and make juice. Go around the language group circle and assist each child in tasting peach nectar. Discuss the thickness of the nectar and its sweetness. Assign communicative intent to each child's responses to the peach fruit and to the peach nectar.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle and peel a peach. Encourage each child to watch as you cut off the skin. Leave each child with a piece of peel to play with, touch, smell, and taste. Go around the language group circle again and assist each child in scooping up some pared peaches and some yogurt and dropping it into the blender. Encourage the children to watch as the food is mixed in the blender. Give each child some of the peach dessert to taste. Assign communicative intent to each child's responses.

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a picture of the bowl of peaches. Assist the children in coloring the peaches yellow and then in coloring them orange. Discuss the language group experience and each child's reaction to it. Sing "The Peach Song" (to the tune of "Bingo"):

I have a fruit that is so sweet
And peaches is its name. Oh,
P-E-A-C-H,
P-E-A-C-H,
P-E-A-C-H
And peaches is its name.

Caution:

Be cautious of the sharp blades on the blender.

Watch the children who have demonstrated sensitivity to extreme temperatures.

Consultation:

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to peaches, yogurt, or any of the ingredients in peach nectar.

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Blueberries

Context:

Experiencing blueberries
Making a blueberry milk shake

Content/Target vocabulary:

blueberries, milk, ice cream, milk shake, can opener, blender, cups
feel, taste, smell, look, listen
open, scoop, pour, blend, drink, color
blue, small, round, soft, sweet, thick, cold
in, on, out

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a child picking blueberries (one copy for each child).

Wash the blueberries and put them in a glass bowl.

Shopping list:

fresh blueberries
blueberry pie filling
ice cream
milk

Other materials:

an electric blender
a serving spoon
an ice-cream scoop
a cup for each child
dark blue crayons

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the children the washed blueberries in a glass bowl. Encourage the children to look through the bowl to see the berries and to reach into the bowl and pick a handful. Allow the children to taste some of the blueberries and to play with them on the wheelchair tray or work station. Discuss each child's reaction to the taste, smell, and feel of the blueberries. Discuss their color and how the inside is different from the outside. Assign communicative intent to each child's responses.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle and have each child assist in putting some blueberry pie filling into the blender. Assist each child in scooping some ice cream into the blender and pouring in a small amount of milk. (Be prepared to clean up a mess. If the children are not physically capable of controlling the amount of pouring, the teacher should pour the milk into the blender.) Encourage the children to watch the mixture as the teacher turns on the blender. Encourage them to hold up their cups while you pour some blueberry milk shake for each child. Discuss each child's reactions to the blueberry milk shake.

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a picture of a child picking berries. Assist each child in coloring the blueberries on the bush and in the bowl. Hang the pictures around the room, and discuss the language group activity. Discuss how blueberries grow and how they are used for pies, milk shakes, and flavoring.

Sing "The Blueberry Song" (to the tune of "Pop Goes the Weasel"):

All around the blueberry bush
We picked the little berries.
Berries are delicious to eat.
Let's eat blueberries!

Caution:

Because of sensory defensiveness or dental problems, some of the children may have difficulty tolerating the extreme cold of the milk shake.

Be cautious of the sharp blades on the blender.

You may want to have the children wear aprons to avoid blueberry stains on their clothing.

Consultation:

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to blueberries, ice cream, or milk.

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Strawberries

Context:

Experiencing strawberries
Making strawberry shortcake

Content/Target vocabulary:

strawberries, shortcake, blender, spoon, plate
listen, smell, taste, look, feel
open, scoop, drop, blend, glue
red, green, spotty, soft, sweet
in, on, out

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a child kneeling in a strawberry patch (one copy for each child).

Cut out two felt strawberries for each child (see pattern, page 56).

Wash the strawberries. Put them in a bucket.

Shopping list:

fresh strawberries
shortcakes
red felt scraps

Other materials:

an electric blender
a serving spoon
a spoon and plate for each child
glue

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle carrying a bucket of strawberries. Allow each child to reach in and take several strawberries. Encourage the child to feel the strawberries, to smash them, and to taste them. Show each child how to pull the green top from the strawberries. Discuss each child's reaction to the texture and taste of the strawberries.

Active Participation

Encourage the children to assist in cleaning their hands, faces, and work stations or wheelchair trays. Carry the bucket of strawberries around the language group circle again, and ask each child to take several strawberries and pull off the green tops. Then assist each child in dropping the strawberries into the blender. After all the strawberries are in the blender, encourage each child to watch as the teacher turns on the blender. Direct their attention to the whirling of the strawberries inside the glass blender. Go around the language group circle and put a small piece of shortcake on each child's plate. Serve some of the strawberries on the shortcake. Assist the children in eating their strawberry shortcake. Discuss each child's reactions to the shortcake and to the language group task.

Symbolic Representation

Assist the children in cleaning the work area. Then pass out the strawberry patch pictures (one picture for two children). Give each child two felt strawberries. Put glue on the picture, and assist the children in finding the places to glue the felt strawberries. Talk to the children about how strawberries grow in a patch and how someone picked the strawberries for their strawberry shortcake. Discuss how everyone shared the bucket of strawberries and the blender of strawberries. Hang the pictures around the room. Discuss each child's reaction to the language group task and discuss the language group throughout the day.

Sing "The Strawberry Song" (to the tune of "Vanderlee"):

I love to go a-wandering
All through the berry patch,
And as I go, I love to pick
Strawberries from the patch.
Pick for me, pick for you,
Pick for me, pick for everybody! La-la!
Pick for me, pick for you,
Strawberries from the patch.

Caution:

Watch to be sure the children don't eat the green strawberry tops.

Do not allow the children to help in cleaning the blender; the blades usually are very sharp.

Consultation:

Check with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to strawberries.

PATTERN FOR STRAWBERRIES

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Grapefruit

Context:

Experiencing a grapefruit
Eating a grapefruit and drinking grapefruit juice
Playing with a symbolic grapefruit

Content/Target vocabulary:

grapefruit, truck, juice
listen, look, smell, feel, taste
squeeze, cut, push, roll, color, pour, drink
round, yellow, smooth, juicy
in, on, out, open

Shopping list:

two grapefruit
grapefruit juice concentrate in a can

Other materials:

a kitchen knife
a manual juice squeezer
water
a pitcher
a stirring spoon
a small cup and a spoon for each child
yellow golf balls
a large toy truck

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the children a grapefruit. Let each child experience the feel and smell of the grapefruit. Roll the grapefruit on each child's wheelchair tray or work station. Play with the grapefruit, rolling it back and forth between the child and the adult. Go around the language group circle again, and encourage each child to watch while the teacher cuts the grapefruit open a little bit at a time. Encourage the child to participate in squeezing the grapefruit by pressing it down on the juicer. Have each child taste the juice. Assign communicative intent to each child's reactions to the smell, feel, and taste of the grapefruit. Discuss the child's reactions.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle and have each child assist in making grapefruit juice, adding water to the frozen concentrate and stirring the juice. Assist them in tasting some of the grapefruit juice. Then go around the language group circle again as you open another grapefruit. Have the children watch as the grapefruit is cut open. Assist each child in tasting some of the grapefruit.

Symbolic Representation

Go around the language group circle and have each child put a yellow golf ball in the back of the truck. Push the truck across the child's wheelchair tray or work station. Discuss how "the grapefruit rides on the truck to the store" and how "the grapefruit rides on the truck to the juice factory." Have each child take a "grapefruit" golf ball off the truck and drop it into the empty grapefruit juice can. Discuss with the child how the grapefruit juice is put in the can for us to drink. Assign communicative intent to each child's reactions.

Sing "The Grapefruit Song" (to the tune of "When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again"):

We're squeezing grapefruit juice again,
Hurrah, hurrah!
We'll give you a great big glassful then,
Hurrah, hurrah!
The men will pucker,
The boys will frown,
The ladies, they will all drink it down,
And we'll all squeeze grapefruit juice
And we'll drink it down!

Caution:

Be sure each child is positioned optimally for drinking juice.

Some children may gasp after receiving a small amount of the sour grapefruit juice; watch for aspiration. Watch for seeds in the juice to avoid the possibility of any child choking on a seed.

Some children may have difficulty managing the texture of the grapefruit.

Consultation:

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to grapefruit or grapefruit juice.

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Green Beans

Context:

Experiencing green beans
Preparing green beans for cooking

Content/Target vocabulary:

beans, bag, ends
feel, smell, taste, look, listen
reach, grab, break, wash, cook, eat
green, long, crisp
on, in, off

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of green beans (one copy for each child).

Cut out a felt green bean for each child (see pattern below).

Shopping list:

green beans
green felt scraps

Other materials:

garbage container
a bucket of water
a stove or electric burner
a pot filled with boiling water
a fork or spoon and a bowl for each child
glue

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show each child a green bean. Let them smell and feel it. Then go around the language group circle again and assist the children in reaching into a paper bag of green beans and pulling out a handful.

Active Participation

Assist the children in breaking off the ends of the green beans. Prompt them to listen to the sound and to feel the crispness of the bean as it breaks. Discuss the color and shape. Help the children throw away the ends of the green beans into a garbage container. Assist the children in washing the beans in the bucket of water. Drop the beans into the pot of boiling water. Have the children do the symbolic representation task while the beans cook. Discuss how good the green beans smell as they are cooking. Serve the cooked beans to the children for tasting.

Symbolic Representation

Assist each child in gluing a green felt bean onto a picture. Give each child a picture of green beans growing on the beanstalk. Discuss how the beans grow and how the picture looks. Hang the pictures around the room, and discuss them with the language group during the day.

Sing "The Green Bean Song" (to the tune of "Oh, Dear, What Can the Matter Be"):

Oh dear, where can the green beans be?
Oh dear, where can the green beans be?
Oh dear, where can the green beans be?
They're growing on plants for me!

Caution:

Be sure the children don't put the raw beans in their mouths.

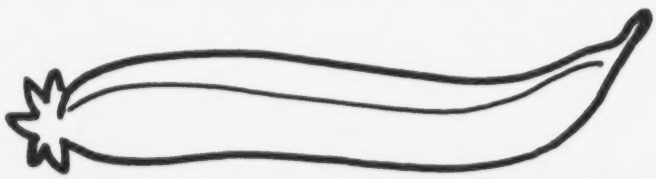
Watch the children very carefully around the boiling water.

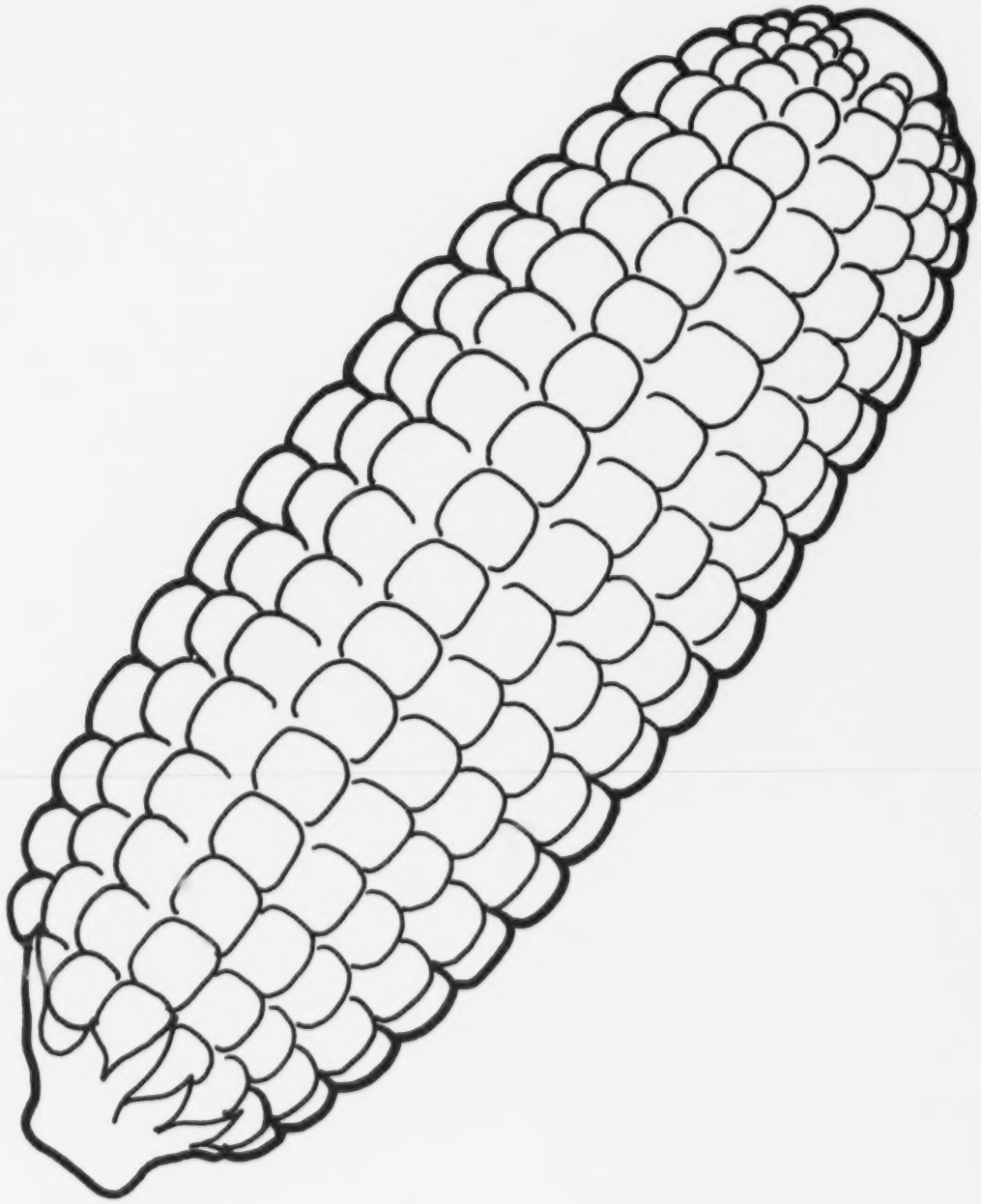
Consultations:

Consult with medical staff or the occupational therapist to determine whether any children might have difficulty managing the cooking beans. Mash the beans for those children who have difficulty with oral-motor tasks.

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to green beans.

PATTERN FOR GREEN BEAN





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Corn

Context:

Experiencing an ear of corn
Husking corn

Content/Target vocabulary:

corn, husk, silk, pan, can, plate, spoon, kernel
feel, smell, taste, look, listen
grab, peel, clean, cook, eat, drop
green, smooth, soft, creamy
in, on, open

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of corn (one copy for each child).

Pop some popcorn to bring to the classroom.

Shopping list:

an ear of corn for each child
a can of creamed corn
popcorn

Other materials:

a dishpan
a stove or electric burner
a saucepan
a can opener
a plate and spoon for each child
glue

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the children an ear of corn. Encourage them to feel it, smell it, and listen to the crinkle of the husks as they move their hands over the corn. Allow the children to play with the corn while the teacher heats some creamed corn. Go around the language group circle and have each child taste and smell the creamed corn. Discuss their reactions to the ear of corn and to the creamed corn.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle again and assist the child in husking the ear of corn into the dishpan. Discuss how the silk feels and how the corn inside feels and smells. Discuss each child's reactions to husking the corn. Elicit as much independent participation as possible while husking the corn.

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a picture of the ear of corn. Put some glue in the center over the area where the corn kernels grow. Assist the children in reaching into a bag of popcorn and dropping some kernels onto the glued area. Then put some glue on the picture where the husks and silk grow. Assist the children in taking some silk and some husks from the dishpan and gluing it in place on the picture. Hang the corn pictures around the room, and discuss the language group activity.

Sing "The Corn Song" (to the tune of "A-Hunting We Will Go"):

A-husking we will go,
A-husking we will go.
Pick an ear and clean it there.
A-husking we will go.

Caution:

Make sure the children don't try to eat any of the popcorn kernels that didn't pop.

Creamed corn is suggested for this activity because it is less likely to elicit choking and gagging in most children.

Consultations:

Consult with the occupational therapist, physical therapist, or teacher regarding any children who may be tactilely defensive. Some children will have difficulty tolerating the feel of the corn. Methods of minimizing their defensiveness may be discussed with other staff members so the activity is pleasant for all children.

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to corn.

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Tomatoes

Context:

Experiencing a tomato
Making tomato soup

Content/Target vocabulary:

tomato, vine, can, can opener, bowls, spoons, water, top, soup, juice
taste, smell, look, listen, feel
drink, roll, squeeze, squirt, stir, eat, glue
hot, soft, fuzzy, red, green
in, out, on

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a tomato plant (one copy for each child).

Cut out a red felt tomato for each child (see pattern on the following page).

Shopping list:

cherry tomatoes
a can of tomato juice
a can of tomato soup
red felt scraps

Other materials:

a cup, bowl, and spoon for each child
a can opener
a glass bowl
a stirring spoon
hot water
glue

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the children the cherry tomatoes. Allow them to feel and smell the tomatoes. Encourage each child to roll a tomato on the wheelchair tray or work station. Assist each child in pulling off the green top from the tomato. Allow the children to squeeze a tomato and listen to the skin break. Encourage them to watch the tomato juice squirt out of the tomato. Wipe up each child's work area and then go around the language group circle again, encouraging the children to watch as you pour a small amount of tomato juice into each child's cup. Assist the children in tasting the tomato juice. Assign communicative intent to each child's reactions to the juice. Compare the taste of the tomato juice to the taste of the tomato (for those children who can manage biting and chewing a cherry tomato).

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle and show the children a can of tomato soup. Allow each child who has the fine motor ability to turn the can opener. Spoon the soup into a glass bowl and add a can of hot water. Allow the children to assist in stirring and mixing the water into the tomato soup. Direct their attention to the consistency of the soup and how it becomes well mixed once it is stirred. Scoop up a small amount of soup for each child to taste. Assign communicative intent to the child's reactions to the taste of the tomato soup and to the task.

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a picture of the tomato plant. Encourage the children to glue a red felt tomato onto the picture of the tomatoes on the vine. Hang the pictures around the room. Discuss the language group task throughout the day.

Bring out the empty tomato juice can. Use a stick to tap on the can during "The Tomato Song," and assist the children in clapping the time while you are tapping on the can. (The asterisk marks the places for the children to clap their hands and for you to tap on the tomato can.)

Oh* Oh* Tomato***
Oh* Oh* Tomato***
Big* (pause)* Tomatoes***
Little* (pause)* Tomatoes***
Red* tomatoes* on the vine***
Juicy* (pause)* Tomatoes***
Soupy* (pause)* Tomatoes***
Oh* tomatoes* are so fine***
Oh* Oh* Tomato***
Oh* Oh* Tomato***

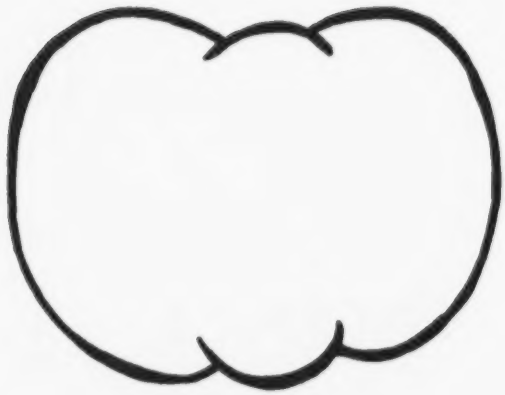
Caution:

Be careful that the children don't scald themselves on the hot water when making the soup.

Consultation:

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to tomatoes.

PATTERN FOR TOMATO



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Cranberries

Context:

Experiencing cranberries
Making cranberry necklaces

Content/Target vocabulary:

cranberries, bowl, plate, spoon, can, can opener, cranberry sauce, string, necklace
look, smell, feel, watch, taste
roll, pick up, eat, string, wear
red, round
in, on, through, around (the neck)

Preparation:

Collect pictures of cranberry sauce from magazines or labels of cans.

Shopping list:

raw cranberries
cranberry sauce in a can

Other materials:

a bowl
a can opener
a serving plate
a spoon for each child
strong thread
a needle
large red beads for stringing
shoelaces

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the children the bowl of cranberries. Encourage them to smell and feel the small, hard berries. Discuss how the berries look. Comment on each child's reaction to the berries. Then open the can of cranberries and put them on a plate while encouraging the children to watch. Go around the language group circle again, and have each child taste the cranberries. Allow each child to feel some of the cranberry sauce. Discuss their reactions to the taste and feel of the cranberry sauce.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle and show the children a needle and the strong thread. Encourage the children to watch as you put the needle through the cranberries and thread them on the string. Give each child a shoelace and a large red bead, and have them imitate the stringing of the cranberries to make a necklace. Put the bead necklace around the child's neck, and have the child show the necklace to the next child. After several children have observed the stringing of the real cranberries, tie the string and have the children put the necklace on each of the teachers.

Symbolic Representation

Assist the children in looking at the pictures of cranberry sauce. Assist the child in gazing at the teacher's cranberry necklace and then the picture or can of cranberries.

Sing "The Cranberry Song" (to the tune of "Down in the Valley"):

Look at the cranberries, berries so red.
Cook in the kitchen made these instead.
Made these instead, dear, made these instead.
Made me these cranberries, berries so red.

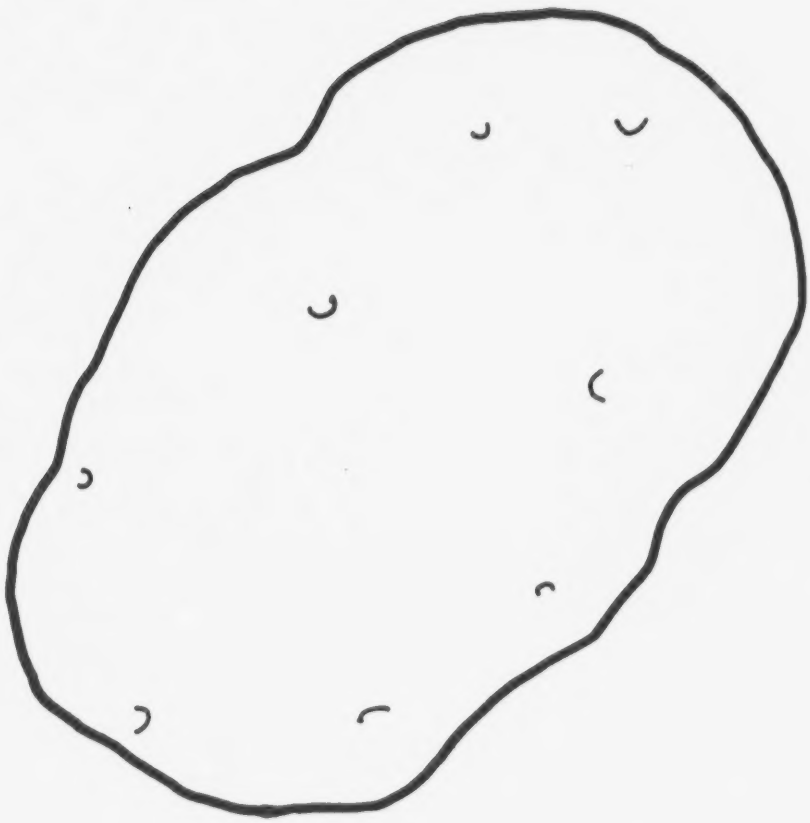
Caution:

Be careful that the children don't grab and eat the raw cranberries. Watch while stringing the cranberries that the child doesn't grab the needle. Be sure the teacher primarily encourages the child to watch the stringing of the cranberry necklace.

Consultations:

Consult the occupational therapist to determine each child's hand function and bead stringing abilities. Prompt each child to use maximum skills.

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to cranberries.



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Potatoes

Context:

Experiencing potatoes
Digging up potatoes

Content/Target vocabulary:

potatoes, mashed potatoes, dirt, bucket
smell, listen, look, feel, taste
find, grasp, show, plant, color
brown, bumpy or rough, dirty
coat, up, in, under

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a potato (one copy for each child).

Shopping list:

a sack of potatoes
instant mashed potato flakes and ingredients

Other materials:

a measuring cup
a saucepan
a stove or electric burner
a large spoon
a plate and spoon for each child
a bucket of dirt
brown crayons

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and give each child a potato. Encourage the child to feel the potato skin. Cut the potato in half and encourage the child to touch the inside, comparing the smooth inside to the rough outside. Have the child smell and taste the raw potato, and assign communicative intent to all responses. Discuss which children seem to reject the potato flavor and which children seem to be amused by the texture and taste of the potato.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle again, letting each child participate in making instant mashed potatoes. Encourage each child to take a turn stirring and adding some of the ingredients. Have each child taste the mashed potatoes. Compare their reactions to the mashed potatoes and the raw potato. Discuss the differences in textures between the raw potato and the mashed potatoes. Assign communicative intent to the child's responses. Go around the language group circle and assist each child in finding a potato that has been buried in a bucket of dirt. When the child finds a potato, encourage the child to grasp it and hold it up to show the other children. Discuss how potatoes grow in the dirt and how farmers dig up the potatoes. Assign meaning to each child's response to the feel of the potato in the dirt.

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a picture of a potato, and assist them in coloring their pictures. Hang the pictures around the room, and discuss the language group task throughout the day. Sing "The Potato Song" (which is a type of chant):

Ah-oh,
Ah-oh,
I said ah-oh, potato.
I said ah-oh, potato.

One potato, two potato, three potato, four.
I love potatoes, and I want some more!

I said ah-oh, potato.
I said ah-oh, potato.

Caution:

When preparing the instant mashed potatoes, be careful that the children don't get burned.

Consultation:

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to potatoes or the ingredients in the mashed potatoes.

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Carrots

Context:

Experiencing carrots
Pulling up carrots

Content/Target vocabulary:

carrots, tops, leaves, juice
listen, look, smell, feel, taste
pull, grasp, show, color
green, orange (color), long
up, in, out, under, down

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a carrot (one copy for each child).

Shopping list:

a bunch of carrots with green tops
carrot juice
pureed carrots

Other materials:

a cup, a bowl, and a spoon for each child
a bucket of dirt
orange crayons
artificial grass
glue

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the children the carrots with the green tops. Assist them in feeling the orange part and then the green part of a carrot. Discuss the differences in texture. Encourage the children to smell the two parts of the carrot. Discuss the differences in the way they smell. Assist the children in visually examining the carrots, tracking from the tip of the carrot to the top of the longest green leaves. Go around the language group circle and assist the children in tasting some carrot juice and a small amount of pureed carrots. Discuss their responses to the taste of the carrots. Assist them in smelling the juice of the pureed carrots and comparing it to the smell of the fresh carrot. Assign communicative intent to the children's responses.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle carrying a bucket of dirt with carrots pushed down into it. Assist the children in reaching out and pulling a carrot by its top out of the bucket of dirt. Discuss how carrots grow in the ground and how they are pulled up out of the ground. Have the children show each other the carrots they have pulled up.

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a picture of a carrot, and assist them in coloring the bottom half of the carrot orange and the top part of the carrot green. Assist the children in gluing a little bit of artificial grass to the tops of the carrots. Hang the pictures around the room, and discuss the language group experience throughout the day. Sing "The Carrot Song" (to the tune of "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean"):

My carrots have tops that are leafy.
The orange part grows under the ground.
I'll reach down and pull up a carrot!
Just look at the carrot I found!
Eat up, eat up,
Oh, eat up some carrots with me, with me!
Eat up, eat up,
Oh, eat up some carrots with me!

Caution:

Don't let the children put the green carrot tops or artificial grass in their mouths.

Consultation:

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to carrots.

Peas

Context:

Experiencing peas
Shelling peas

Content/Target vocabulary:

peas, pea pods, bowls, spoons, pot, can opener
listen, look, feel, taste, smell
shelling, cook, glue
green, long, brown
in, open

Shopping list:

peas in the pod
a can of peas

Other materials:

a large dishpan
a can opener
stove or electric burner
a saucepan
a bowl and spoon for each child
poster board
glue

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle carrying a dishpan of peas in the pod. Take out one of the pea pods and show it to each child. Assist the children in feeling and smelling the pea pods. Assist each child in reaching into the dishpan and grabbing a handful of pea pods. Discuss how it feels to hold the pea pods between the fingers. Assist the child in letting go and watching the pea pods fall back into the dishpan. Assign communicative intent to each child's reactions to the peas in the pod.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle and show the children a can of peas. Assist them in looking at the picture of peas on the label. Encourage the children to watch while the teacher opens the can of peas and pours the peas into the saucepan. Prompt the children to smell the peas as they are heated. Discuss how they smell. When the peas are heated, give some to each child. Assist the children in eating their peas. Assign communicative intent to each child's reactions to the peas. Collect the bowls and spoons. Go around the language group again with the dishpan of peas. Assist each child in shelling some of the peas. Leave the pea shells and peas on the child's wheelchair tray (if it is safe and if the child will not try to eat the uncooked peas). Discuss how the peas look different outside the pod. Discuss the action of shelling peas. Talk about how we eat the peas and not the pea pods. Discuss the amount of work that goes into preparing one can of peas. Assign communicative intent to each child's response to the activity.

Symbolic Representation

Go around the language group circle and show the children the poster board. Assist each child in putting glue on the board and gluing down their pea pods. Hang the posters in the room, and discuss the language group events throughout the day.

Sing "The Pea Song" (to the tune of "I've Been Working on the Railroad"):

I've been working on the pea pods
All the livelong day.
I've been working on the pea pods
Just to pass the time away.
Can't you see the peas a-boiling.
Lift up your bowl to get some more.
Can't you hear the cook a-calling.
"Blow the dinner horn."

Caution:

Be sure the children do not try to eat the uncooked peas or the pea pods.

Watch the children carefully around the hot stove.

Consultation:

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to peas.

Beans and Bean Salad

Context:

Experiencing beans
Making bean salad

Content/Target vocabulary:

beans, cans, can opener, dressing, sugar, onions
listen, look, taste, smell, feel
break, open, mix, stir
crisp, green
in, out, on

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of green beans on page 58 (one copy for each child).

Chop ½ cup green onions.

Wash the fresh green beans and put them in a bucket.

Shopping list:

fresh green beans

Ingredients for bean salad:
1 can French cut green beans, drained
1 can wax beans, drained
1 can red kidney beans, drained
Italian dressing
1 tablespoon sugar
½ cup chopped green onions

Other materials:

a large mixing bowl
a stirring spoon
a paper plate and spoon for each child
green crayons

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the children the bucket of beans. Encourage them to reach into the bucket and rub the green beans between their hands. Encourage each child to grasp a handful of beans and put them on the wheelchair tray or work station. Discuss how the beans feel between their fingers. Talk about how they look on the tray. Encourage each child to stroke the long green bean and feel its texture. Then show the children how to break off the ends. Discuss how the beans crack because of their crispness. Discuss the greenness of the beans and how they look on the inside and on the outside. Assign communicative intent to each child's response to the beans.

Active Participation

Open the cans and assist each child in scooping out some of the beans from each of the cans into the large bowl, and stirring the bean salad. Discuss how the different beans look, feel, smell, and taste. Compare the textures of the various beans. Assign communicative intent to each child's responses to making the bean salad and tasting the beans.

Symbolic Representation

Assist the children in cleaning up the work area. Give each child a picture of the green beans. Discuss how the green beans grow on bean plants. Assist the children in finding the beans on the plant and then coloring the beans green. Hang the bean pictures around the room and discuss the language group activity throughout the day.

Sing "The Bean Song" (to the tune of "99 Bottles of Beer on the Wall"):

Ten little beans in the bowl
Ten little beans.
Take them out and pass them about.
Nine little beans in the bowl.

Nine little beans in the bowl.
Nine little beans.
Take them out and pass them about.
Eight little beans in the bowl.

(And so on)

Caution:

Make sure the children do not attempt to eat any of the uncooked beans.

Consultation:

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to beans or other ingredients in the salad.

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Lemonade

Context:

Experiencing a lemon
Making lemonade
Building a lemon tree

Content/Target vocabulary:

lemon, seeds, lemonade, pitcher, spoon, glass, tree
feel, listen, look, taste, smell
squeeze, pick out (the seeds), stir, pour, drink, hang
yellow, round, sour, sticky, cold
in, on, out

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a lemon tree (one copy for each child).

Bring a tree branch to the classroom.

Wrap wire around the top of several plastic lemons (or empty lemon-shaped juice containers) to form a hook.

Shopping list:

fresh lemons
frozen lemonade concentrate

Other materials:

a kitchen knife
a cutting board
a glass for each child
a pitcher
a stirring spoon
water
yellow crayons

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Give each child a lemon. Assist the children with rolling the lemon on the wheelchair tray or work station and between their hands. Have them smell the lemon fragrance on their hands. Assist the children in digging their fingernails into the rind to start peeling the lemon. Peel a lemon for each child, and put some of the rind on each child's tray. Bring a cutting board and a knife, and encourage each child to watch while you cut open the lemon. Assist each child in squeezing half of the lemon into a glass to make lemon juice. Encourage the children to play with the other half of the lemon and to try to pull the lemon apart. Discuss their reactions to the smell, taste, and feel of the lemon.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle and have the children participate in mixing the water with frozen lemonade. Have them assist in stirring. Pour some lemonade and assist each child in drinking the lemonade.

Symbolic Representation

Before class, twist a wire around the top of the plastic lemons to form a hook. Go around the language group circle and show the children a plastic lemon. Assist each child in hanging a plastic lemon on the tree branch. Give each child a picture of the lemon tree, and assist the children in coloring the lemons yellow. Prop up the plastic lemon tree in a corner of the room for decoration, and hang the lemon tree pictures on the bulletin board. Discuss lemons and the lemon language group experience throughout the day.

Sing "Lemon Tree":

Lemon tree very pretty
And the lemon flower is sweet,
But the fruit of the poor lemon
Is impossible to eat.

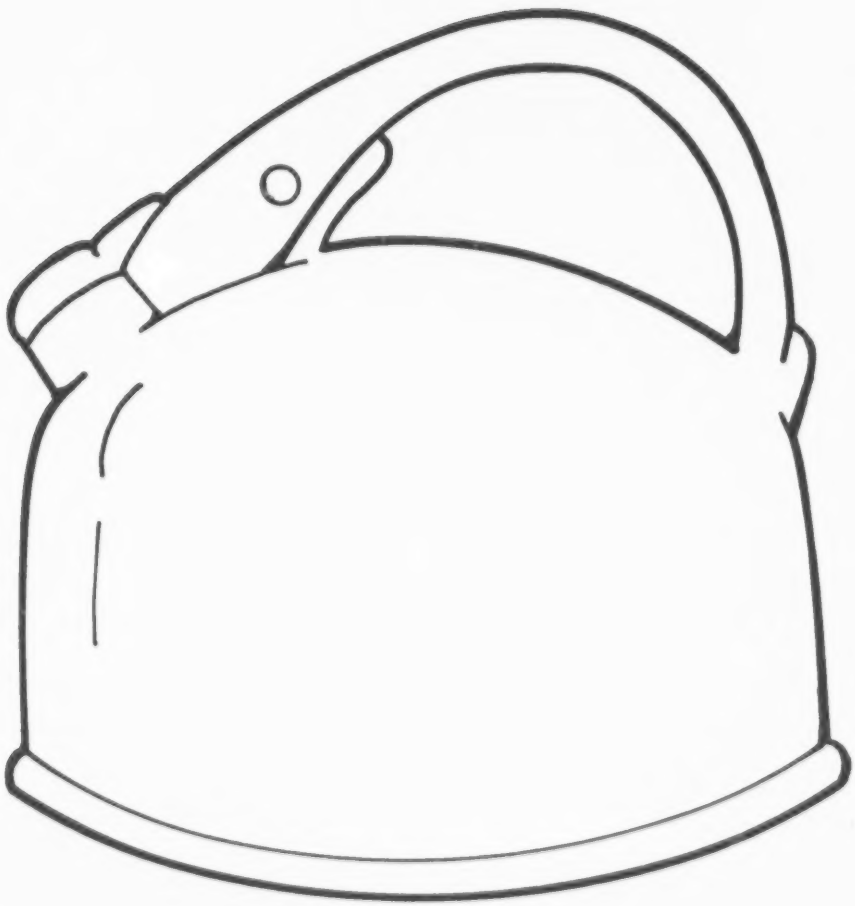
Caution:

Some children may have difficulty with the sour taste of the lemons. Do not overstimulate their sense of taste.

Sometimes the ends of the wires can be sharp. Be careful that the children don't poke themselves or others.

Consultation:

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to lemons or the ingredients in lemonade.



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Tea

Context:

Experiencing a cup of tea
Making a pot of tea

Content/Target vocabulary:

tea, teapot, sugar, spoons, cups
taste, smell, look, listen, feel
look, drop, taste, drink, pour, give
hot, cold, sweet, bitter
in, on, out

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a tea bag, cup, and teakettle (one copy for each child).

Make a pot of hot tea just before beginning the activity.

Shopping list:

tea bags
a fresh lemon

Other materials:

sugar
a spoon
a whistling teakettle
water
a stove or electric burner
a cup for each child
a large jug
ice cubes
crayons
glue
a cup for each teacher who participates in the tea-sharing task

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and pour each child a very small amount of warm tea. Assist the children in tasting the tea. Discuss their reactions to the flavor. Then add lemon and sugar to the tea, and assist the children in tasting it again.

Active Participation

Put water on to boil. When it comes to a boil, direct the children's attention to the whistling of the teakettle. Discuss the sound. Pour the hot water into the teapot.

Go around the language group circle and discuss how tea is made. Tell the children, "I put the tea bag in the hot water." Assist the children in dropping a tea bag into the water in the teapot. Let the tea steep.

Later, assist the children in putting the cold tea in a jug and adding ice cubes. Have the children taste the cold tea. Discuss each child's reaction to the warm tea and to the cold tea.

Go around the school and offer other teachers some of the tea. The tea-sharing task can be done with either the hot tea or with the cold tea, depending on the most convenient time in everyone's schedule.

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a picture of the tea bag, cup, and teakettle. Tear open a tea bag, and assist the children in gluing some leaf tea onto the picture of the tea bag. Then help the children color the tea cup.

Sing "Tea For Two" and "I'm A Little Teapot."

Caution:

Don't use styrofoam cups with children who have cerebral palsy. A child with feeding or drinking difficulties may have a bite reflex and could easily bite off a piece of the styrofoam cup.

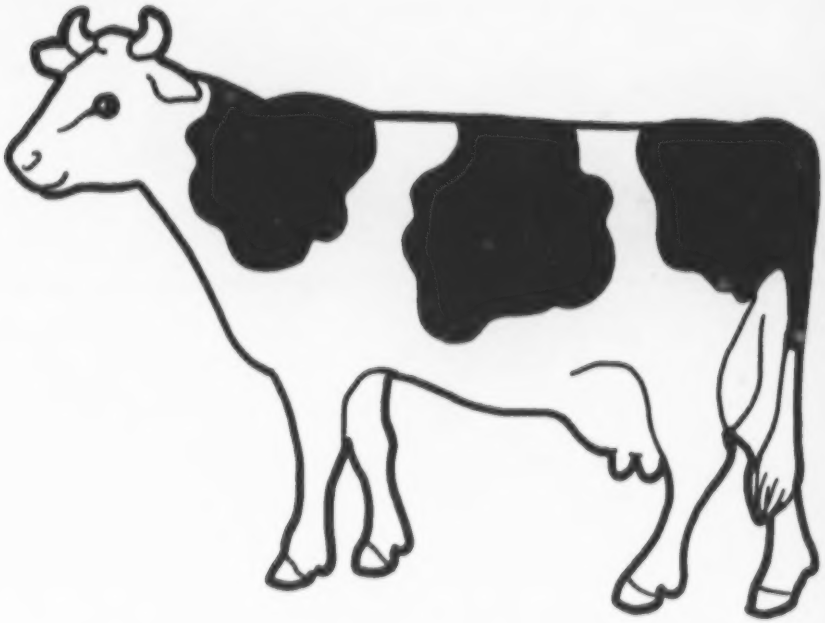
Watch that the children don't attempt to eat the raw tea leaves.

Be extremely cautious when the children are near the boiling water. Make sure their tea is only warm and not hot.

Consultations:

Notice whether any of the children are more able to tolerate the warm beverage than the cold. You may want to incorporate this information in their feeding programs.

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to tea, lemon, or sugar.



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Milk

Context:

Experiencing milk
Making a milk shake

Content/Target vocabulary:

milk, carton, string, cup, blender, ice cream
listen, look, taste, smell, feel
drink, blend, hang, color, swing, hit
white, cold, smooth, creamy
in, out

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a cow, a milk carton, and a cup (one copy for each child).

Collect a variety of milk cartons (plastic gallon jugs, pint-sized and quart-sized cartons)

Shopping list:

milk
ice cream
vanilla flavoring

Other materials:

a cup for each child
an electric blender
an ice-cream scoop
crayons
string
thumb tacks

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and pour a small cup of milk for each child. Discuss how the milk looks, feels, and tastes. Assign meaning to each child's response to the milk.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle and assist each child in adding a scoop of ice cream and a small amount of milk into the blender. Add vanilla. Assist each child in feeling the vibration of the blender and in watching the motion of the mixture inside it. Go around the language group circle, pour some milk shake in each child's cup, and assist each one in tasting the milk shake. Discuss how cold, how creamy, and thick it is. Discuss how it was made. Assign meaning to each child's response to the ice cream milk shake.

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a picture of the cow, the milk carton, and the cup. Assist each child in coloring a picture, and hang them on the bulletin board. Put a string through each of the various milk containers, and hang them near the children's pictures. Sing "The Milk Song" (to the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It"), and assist each child in hitting the milk containers with their hands or with a stick.

From the moo-cow, and you know it, comes your milk.
(*Clap-clap, or tap-tap at the milk carton*)

From your carton, and you know it, comes your milk.
(*Clap-clap, or tap-tap at the milk carton*)

From your own cup, if you know it, and you really want to show it,

From your own cup, and you know it, comes your milk.
(*Clap-clap, or tap-tap at the milk carton*)

Caution:

Some children may have difficulty with the cold temperature of the milk shake.

Be careful of the sharp blades on the blender.

Consultation:

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to milk products.

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Juice

Context:

Experiencing juice
Making juice

Content/Target vocabulary:

juice, water, spoon, pitcher, cup
look, listen, taste, smell
pour, drink, stir, mix, choose, vote
flavors, colors, sweet, cold, more
in, out

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of children pouring and drinking juice (one copy for each child).

Shopping list:

packages of juice powder

Other materials:

a large spoon
quart containers
water
a cup for each child
crayons (Choose crayons that match the flavors of the juice being offered; for example, red for cherry, green for lime.)

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Encourage the children to watch as you go around the circle and call out each child's name as you put a cup on that child's wheelchair tray or work station. Go around the circle again and encourage the children to watch as you pour a small amount of juice in each child's cup. Assist the children in drinking their juice. Discuss each child's reaction to the flavor and temperature of the juice.

Active Participation

Ask, "Who wants more juice?" and " Who could help make more juice?" Assist the children in going to the water supply and filling a container.

Present two flavors of juice. Assist each child in eye pointing or pointing to the juice of their preference. Call out the classroom votes and prepare to make the chosen flavor.

Assist each child in pouring in a small amount of powder from the packet to the container of water. Assist the children in taking turns stirring the juice. Go around the circle again, calling out each child's name, pouring juice, and assisting the children in tasting the juice.

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a picture of children pouring and drinking juice. Assist each child in coloring the glasses and pitcher full of juice. Hang the pictures around the room, and discuss the language group activity.

Sing "The Juice Song" (to the tune of "Hush Little Baby"):

Here, little friend, here comes some juice.
I'm going to give you a cup of juice.
And when this cup of juice is done
I'm going to give you another one.

Caution:

Some children react negatively to cold juice. If this is a problem with the majority of children in your classroom, serve the juice at room temperature. Watch for children who have problems swallowing or managing thin liquids.

Consultations:

Make sure the children are in optimal positions for drinking.

Consult with feeding specialists about any children who have oral motor problems which prevent them from being able to drink the thin texture of the juice. In some situations, they may recommend thickening the juice with fruit.

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to juice or should not drink a sugar-based liquid.

Soda Pop

Context:

Experiencing soda pop
Using a soda pop machine

Content/Target vocabulary:

can, pop
look, listen, smell, taste, feel
open, push, take, pour, share
sweet, bubbly, various flavors, cold
open, in, out

Preparation:

Photocopy the four parts that make the picture of a soda pop machine (pages 81-84). Trim the edges, and glue them together on a 17" x 22" piece of poster board. Cut the money slot, and glue or tape a small box to the back of the board to catch coins. Cut a flap-like door at the bottom so pop can roll out from behind the picture.

Have the correct change available to buy a can of soda pop for each child.

Collect magazine pictures of soda pop and people drinking it.

Materials:

scissors
glue
poster board
a small box
tape
coins
a cup for each child

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Take the children on a class trip to a soda pop machine. Have each child participate in putting in the money and selecting through eye pointing or touching. Direct the children's attention to the sound of the can falling through the machine. Collect the unopened cans of pop and return to the classroom.

Active Participation

Give each child a cold can of soda pop. Have the child feel it and listen to the carbonation as you open the can. Have each child assist in pouring a small amount of the pop into a cup. Assist the children in tasting the pop. Discuss how the pop feels "bubbly" in the mouth. Discuss how cold and sweet the pop tastes. Discuss how to get pop from the pop machine. After everyone has drunk pop, go around the language group circle and discuss the pop machine experience again, using the poster to demonstrate. Have each child put a coin into the poster while an aide pushes one of the empty cans of pop through the flap-like door at the bottom of the poster.

Symbolic Representation

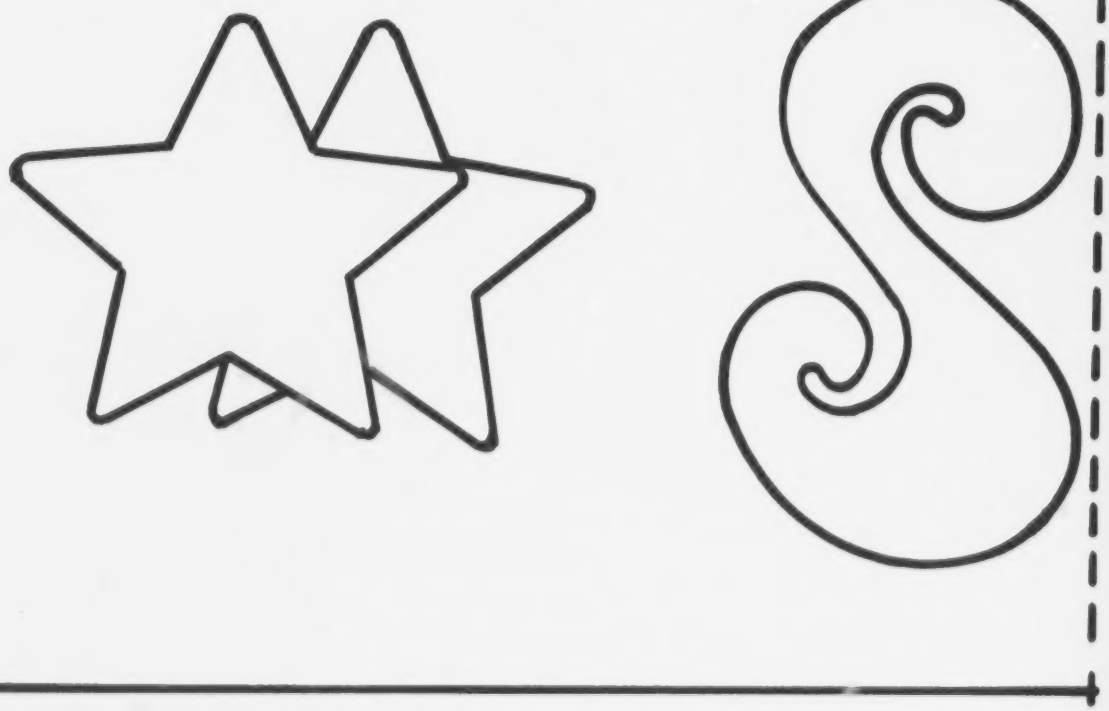
Have the children look at the pictures of different kinds of pop and people drinking pop. Assist the children in making a collage, and hang it in the room. Discuss the language experience throughout the day.

Sing "The Pop Song" (to the tune of "This Land Is Your Land"):

This can is your can,
This can is my can.
I drank some cold pop
Right out of my can.
This can was made for you and me.

Consultation:

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children should not drink sugar-based soda pop.



Insert Coin

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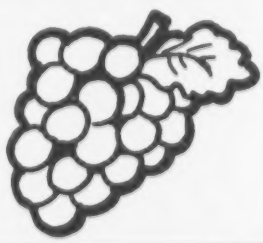

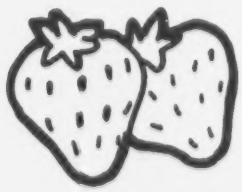

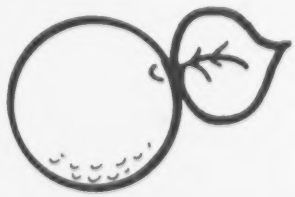

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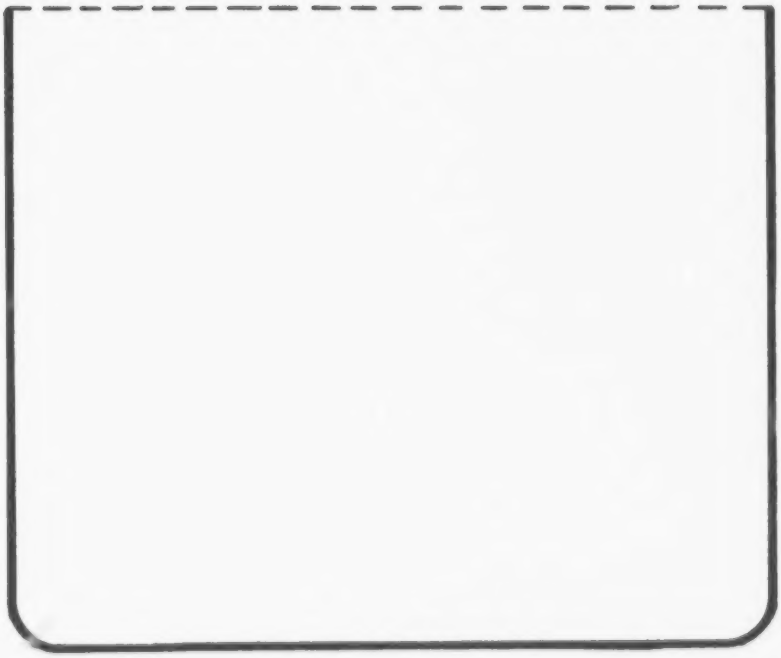

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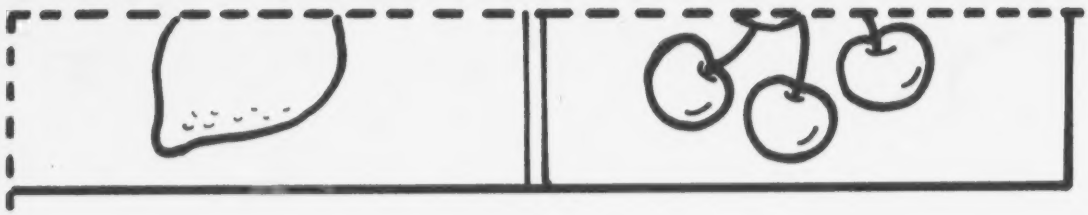

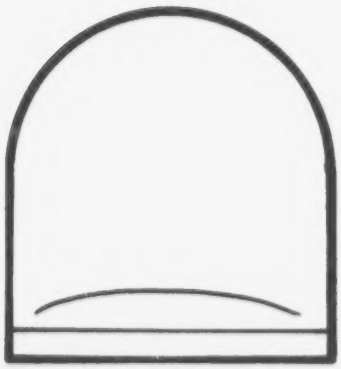

Coin Return

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JELL-O™*

Context:

Experiencing JELL-O
Making JELL-O

Content/Target vocabulary:

JELL-O, dish, spoon, cube, tray, water
listen, taste, smell, look, feel
wiggle, pour, pick up
wiggly, colors, flavors, hot, cold
in, on, out

Preparation:

Collect pictures of gelatin desserts, available in magazines or from General Foods Corp.

The day before the activity, make an ice-cube tray of JELL-O.

Shopping list:

several boxes of JELL-O

Other materials:

a refrigerator
ice-cube trays
a large bowl
water
a stirring spoon
a whistling teakettle
a stove or electric burner
a bowl and spoon for each child
scissors
glue
poster board

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Encourage each child to watch as the teacher takes pre-made JELL-O cubes out of the ice-cube tray. Encourage the children to feel the gelatin and try to pick up the cubes with their fingers. Let them taste the JELL-O. Discuss each child's reactions to the flavor and texture.

Active Participation

Have the children pour some gelatin powder onto their wheelchair trays or work stations. Allow each child to feel and taste some of the gelatin powder. Have the child pour the rest of the powder into a large bowl. Direct the children's attention to the whistling kettle as the water boils and to the gelatin in the bowl as the teacher pours the hot water over it. Discuss how the powder dissolves. Encourage the children to feel the warmth of the bowl after the water has been added to the powder. Direct the children's attention as the teacher pours the liquid JELL-O into the ice-cube tray and puts the tray into the refrigerator. Discuss how the JELL-O will change. Later in the day, bring out the solidified JELL-O for the children to play with and taste.

Symbolic Representation

Assist the children in looking at the pictures of the JELL-O. Discuss the pictures. Cut out the pictures and glue them on the poster board. Hang the collage, and discuss the language group experience throughout the day.

Sing "The JELL-O Song" (to the tune of "See-Saw Marjorie Daw"):

JELL-O, JELL-O, so red.
I shall have a new color.
We shall have a color a day
Because we love eating red JELL-O.

Sing the verse with each color of JELL-O made.

Caution:

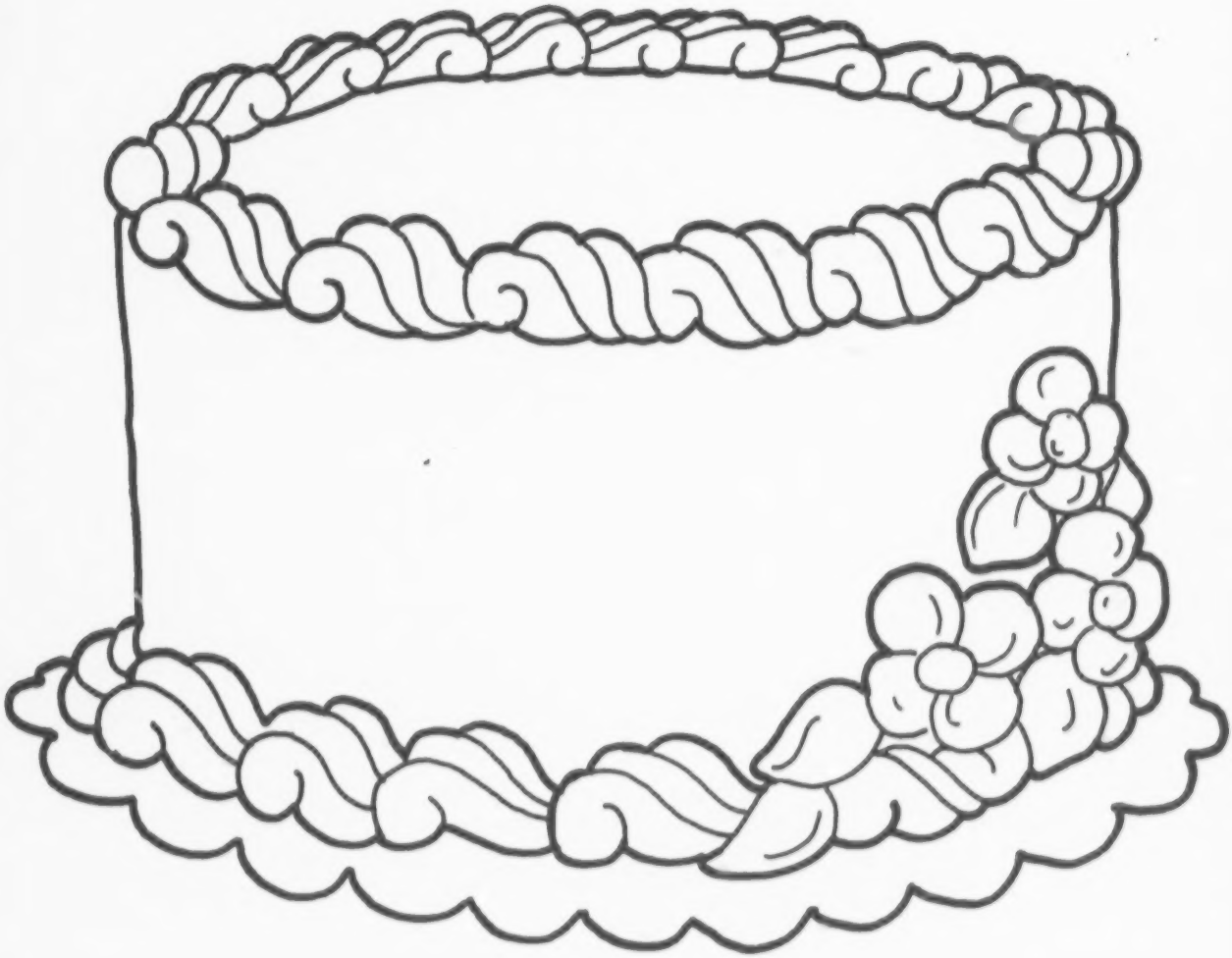
Be extremely cautious when the children are near the boiling water. Be sure they don't put their hands in the hot liquid. Also make sure the bowl is not too hot when the children feel it. Don't let the children put their tongues or mouths directly on the cold ice-cube tray.

Consultations:

Check with medical staff to determine whether any children may not be able to eat JELL-O.

Discuss with the feeding specialist about whether any children may have difficulty managing the texture of the JELL-O.

*JELL-O is a registered trademark of General Foods Corp.



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Cake

Context:

Experiencing a cake
Baking a cake

Content/Target vocabulary:

cake, frosting, bowl, spoon, pan, eggs, milk
listen, look, taste, smell, feel
decorate, mix, bake, scrape, lick, clean, wash
good, sweet, various flavors and colors
in, out, on

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a cake (one copy for each child).

Collect magazine pictures of decorated cakes.

Bring a piece of cake for the children to share.

Shopping list:

a box of cake mix and ingredients
a can of frosting

Other materials:

crayons
cake decorations
glue

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the children the picture of cake on a cake mix box. Tell the children, "We are going to make a cake." Tell them how it will be made, using "First, . . . Second, . . . Third, . . ." Have the children pass the box to each other as you talk to each child. Assign intent to the child's responses to the pictured cake and the procedure. Tell the child receiving the box what the previous child thought ("Johnny stared at the box because he loves cake" or "Susie doesn't seem to care about the cake. Maybe she doesn't feel like eating cake today"). Go around the language group circle and give each child a taste of cake. Tell the children, "Our cake will taste even better than this." Assign meaning to each child's response to the taste of the cake.

Active Participation

Assist each child to participate in mixing the cake (feeling the egg shells, measuring the liquid, pouring, stirring, scraping out the bowl). Have the children help clean up while the cake bakes. Allow each child to lick fingers and clean out the bowls.

Complete the symbolic representation task while the cake bakes and cools.

When the cake is baked and cooled, assist the children in frosting and decorating the cake. Have them eat and enjoy the cake.

Symbolic Representation

Assist the children in looking at the pictures of decorated cakes. Discuss how each cake looks and how the cakes are different. Give each child a picture of cake. Assist the children in coloring their cakes with crayons, smearing on glue, and dropping on their favorite cake decorations. Hang the decorated pictures around the room, and discuss the language group task. Sing "The Cake Song" (to the tune of "Happy Birthday"):

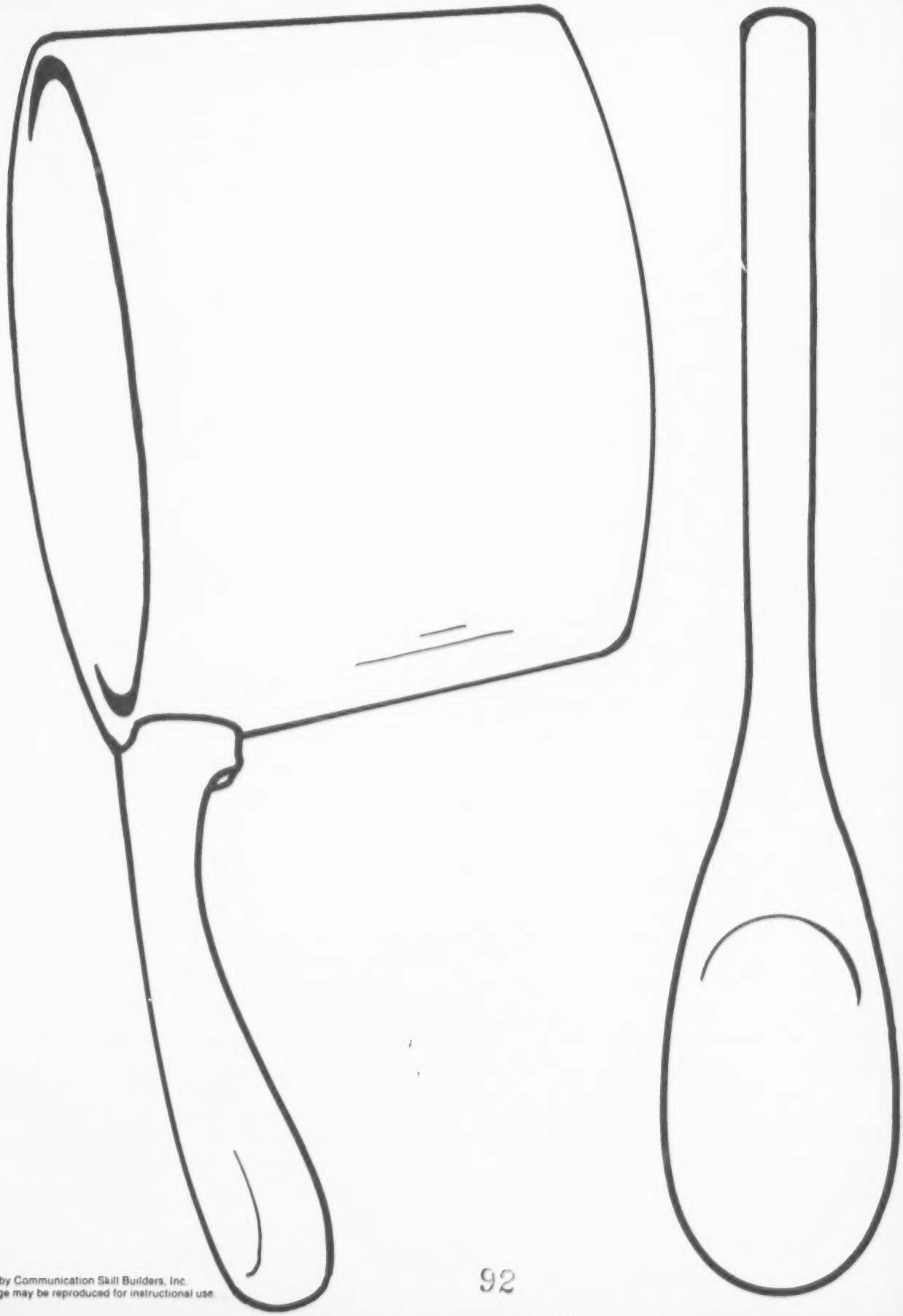
Happy big cake for you,
Happy big cake for you.
Happy big cake, dear friends.
Happy big cake for you.

Caution:

If a mixer is used to beat the cake, be sure the children keep their fingers away from the blades.

Consultation:

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to ingredients in the cake, including sugar.



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Pudding

Context:

Experiencing pudding
Choosing a pudding flavor
Making pudding

Content/Target vocabulary:

pudding, bowl, measuring cup, milk, spoons, cups
look, taste, smell, feel, listen
pour, stir, scoop, eat
powdery, creamy, warm, cold
in, on, out

Preparation:

Photocopy the pictures of the spoon, pot, measuring cup, and pudding box shape.

Make one bowl of pudding to bring to the classroom. Save the empty box.

Shopping list:

three boxes of pudding (two flavors)
milk

Other materials:

a stove or electric burner
a saucepan
a measuring cup
a stirring spoon
a paper plate, cup, and spoon for each child
scissors
glue

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and scoop a small amount of prepared pudding onto a paper plate in front of each child. Allow the children to put their fingers in the pudding, smear it, smell it, taste it, and generally play with it. Discuss their reactions to the flavor, texture, and temperature of the pudding. Assign communicative intent to their reactions. Discuss the flavor of the pudding. Tell the children how the pudding was made ("First I opened the pudding box, poured milk and pudding into a pot, and heated the pudding. Second, I stirred the pudding and poured it into the serving bowl. Then I let the pudding cool for us to play with!"). Point to each object as you mention it in the discussion while the children continue to play with their pudding.

Active Participation

After the children have had sufficient time to explore the pudding, clean their hands and work stations. Tell them what you are going to do together as you help clean them up: "We are going to put the pudding and the milk in the pot. We are going to stir the pudding and let it get hot. We're going to pour the pudding into the serving bowls and let the pudding get cool." Go around the language group circle and have each child choose which of the two boxes of pudding you will make through eye pointing, gesturing, or verbal responses. Announce to everyone the flavor each child chooses. Count the votes and use the flavor for this activity.

Have the children help in opening the box. Assist each child in pouring out the pudding and measuring the milk. Let each child take a turn in stirring the pudding and watching it get hot in the pan. Assist each child in scraping out the pan and putting the pudding into the bowl. While the pudding cools, sequence the objects from left to right and state what was accomplished: "We opened the box of pudding. We poured milk and pudding into the hot pot. We stirred the pudding. We let the pudding get hot. We poured the pudding into the cups, and now the pudding is cooling." While the pudding cools, complete the symbolic representation task. Let the children taste and enjoy the pudding just before the pudding song.

Symbolic Representation

Assist the children in looking at the picture of the sequenced events and gazing from left to right to the various objects as you point. Cut out the front of the pudding box and glue it to the pudding box shape. Discuss the activities of the day and the children's responses to each activity. Assign communicative intent.

Sing "The Pudding Song" (to the tune of "On Top Of Old Smoky"):

On top of the pudding, we added some milk.
We let it get warmer, then we watched it melt.
We kept on a-stirring, we scooped out the pan.
Now we'll eat our pudding as fast as we can.

Caution:
Watch the children closely so no one gets burned.

Consultation:
Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to any ingredients in the pudding, including milk.

(pudding box shape)

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Chocolate

Context:

Experiencing chocolate
Making a chocolate treat
Making chocolate milk

Content/Target vocabulary:

chocolate, cracker, milk, cup
listen, smell, look, taste, feel
drip, dip, scoop, drop
brown, creamy, soft, smooth, stringy, cold
in, on, out

Preparation:

Collect magazine pictures and labels showing chocolate products.

Shopping list:

milk
a can of chocolate syrup
a graham cracker for each child

Other materials:

a tongue blade and a cup for each child
several stirring spoons
poster board
scissors
glue

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle carrying an open can of chocolate syrup. Dip in a tongue blade and encourage the child to watch the syrup drip back into the chocolate can. Then encourage the child to dip a tongue blade into the chocolate syrup. Allow the children to play with the chocolate on the wheelchair tray or work station. Let the children taste the chocolate syrup. Discuss each child's reactions to the taste, the creamy texture, and the smell of the syrup. Describe how the syrup looks. Talk about its color and consistency. Assign communicative intent to each child's responses.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle again and allow each child to dip a graham cracker into the syrup. Encourage the child to watch how the syrup clings to the graham cracker. Describe each child's responses to the taste of the chocolate graham cracker. Then go around the language group circle and pour some milk for each child. Encourage the child to scoop some chocolate from the can into the milk and stir it to make chocolate milk. Assist each child in drinking the chocolate milk, and discuss each child's reactions. Describe the difference between the taste of the syrup alone and the taste of the chocolate milk. Compare the taste of regular milk to chocolate milk. Assign communicative intent to each child's responses.

Symbolic Representation

Go around the language group circle and show each child the pictures and labels. Encourage each child to participate in gluing the labels and pictures on the poster board. Hang the poster, and discuss the language group experience throughout the day.

Sing "The Chocolate Song" (to the tune of "Are You Sleeping?"):

Are you eating,
Are you eating
Chocolate,
Chocolate?
Cup of milk we're drinking.
Cracker we are eating.
Chocolate,
Chocolate.

Consultations:

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to chocolate.

Verify with the feeding specialist that all the children can manage the task of biting, chewing, and swallowing a cracker.

Whipping Cream

Context:

Experiencing whipping cream
Making whipping cream
Squirting whipping cream

Content/Target vocabulary:

whipping cream, mixer and beaters, bowl, spray can, nozzle
taste, feel, look, smell, listen
smear, mix or beat, push, spray
sweet, fluffy, white, creamy, good
in, on, out

Preparation:

Collect magazine pictures of desserts topped with whipping cream.

Shopping list:

a can of whipping cream with a nozzle
a carton of whipping cream
any dessert

Other materials:

an electric mixer
a glass bowl
a serving spoon
scissors
poster board

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle carrying a can of whipping cream. Squirt some whipping cream on each child's clean work area. Allow the children to play in the whipping cream, and encourage them to taste it. Go around the language group circle again and show each child how to manipulate the nozzle on the can of whipping cream. Have each child try to squirt some of the whipping cream onto the wheelchair tray. Assign communicative intent to their reactions to the whipping cream squirting from the can and to the feel and taste of the whipping cream.

Active Participation

Tell the children, "We are going to make some whipping cream." Assist each child in beating the whipping cream, feeling the vibration of the bowl, and watching the whipping cream change texture. Put a spoon in the whipping cream and see if it will stand up. Have each child scoop some of the beaten whipping cream onto the dessert and eat and enjoy it. Assign communicative intent to their responses.

Symbolic Representation

Make a collage of all the whipped cream desserts. Discuss the textures and tastes of the various desserts. Hang the pictures around the room, and discuss the whipping cream language group throughout the day.

Sing "The Whipping Cream Song" (to the tune of "Dixie"):

Oh, there's ice cream cake
And dark fudge batter
Makes you get a little fatter
Look away, look away,
Look away, whipping cream.

Caution:

Be sure the children keep their fingers away from the beaters. Don't let them squirt whipping cream in their eyes.

Consultation:

Discuss with medical staff any potential problems if the individual children might eat large amounts of whipping cream.

Cereal

Context:

Experiencing various cereals
Eating cereal

Content/Target vocabulary:

cereal, milk, bowl, spoon, sugar
smell, taste, listen, look, feel
pour, slide, scoop, eat, drop, put
crunchy, crispy, round, square
in, on, out

Preparation:

Collect empty cereal boxes.

Shopping list:

a variety of cereals in boxes
milk

Other materials:

a bowl and spoon for each child
scissors
glue
poster board

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and encourage the children to listen to the sound of the cereal in the boxes and the sound as it is poured into the bowls. Allow the children to feel the cereal between their fingers and to crunch and smash some of the cereal on the wheelchair tray or work station. Encourage them to smell the cereal. Have each child assist in pouring milk over the cereal. Assist the children in tasting the cereal. Describe their reactions. Assign communicative intent.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle and show the children several boxes of cereal. Encourage the children to divert their gaze among the boxes and to move their eyes from left to right. Encourage each child to choose a cereal. Pour some of the chosen cereal onto the child's wheelchair tray. After everyone has some cereal, go around the language group circle again and encourage the children to sort the different kinds of cereal, using their best grasping skills. Talk about the size, shape, colors, and tastes of the various cereals. Put the similar cereals into a container or another bowl.

Symbolic Representation

Cut up the cereal boxes and assist the children in making a collage. Allow each child to choose which variety of cereal they want to add to the collage. Assist them in gluing the cereal on the collage. Discuss the various colors of the cereal boxes and the colors and textures of the cereal. Hang the collage in the classroom, and discuss the language group throughout the day. Sing "The Cereal Song" (to the tune of "The Farmer In the Dell"):

The cereal in the bowl, the cereal in the bowl.
Hi! Ho! The derry-oh,
The cereal in the bowl.

The bowl takes the milk . . .

The milk takes the spoon . . .

The spoon takes the mouth. . . .

The cereal is all gone, the cereal is all gone.
Hi! Ho! The derry-oh,
The cereal is all gone.

Caution:

Children may try to overstuff their mouths when presented with all the stimuli, and they may want to put the cereal with the glue in their mouths as well.

Consultations:

For the child with oral-motor involvement, you may need to substitute a soft, warm cereal such as oatmeal. In this situation, you may want to consult with the professional in charge of the feeding program.

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to cereal or milk.

Noodles

Context:

Experiencing cooked and uncooked noodles
Cooking noodles

Content/Target vocabulary:

noodles, hot pot, spoon, strainer, water, bowls
taste, feel, smell, listen, look
drop, cook, stir, strain, eat
curly, straight, round, tiny, bubbly, hard, soft
in, on

Shopping list:

a variety of shapes and sizes of noodles

Other materials:

a tray
a stove or electric burner
a large pot of water
a stirring spoon
a strainer
a bowl and spoon for each child
sheets of paper
glue

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Place the boxes and bags of noodles on the tray and go around the language group circle. Allow each child to reach in the bags and pour some noodles on the wheelchair tray or table. Discuss the different shapes, sizes, and colors of the noodles. Allow the children to play with the noodles while you move around the language group circle.

Active Participation

Start the water boiling in a large pot. Have each child choose one type of noodle to add to the boiling water. (This can be done verbally or through eye pointing or reaching.) Add some of the noodles to the water. Discuss the bubbly water as the noodles cook. Have the children observe as you pour the noodles and water into a strainer. Allow each child to spoon some of the noodles into a bowl. Assist them in eating the noodles. Discuss their reactions.

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a sheet of paper. Allow the children to pour the glue in any pattern onto the paper. Then assist them in dropping some of the uncooked noodles onto their paper to create textured noodle art. Display the noodle art on the bulletin board.

Sing "The Noodle Song" (to the tune of "Did You Ever See A Lassie?"):

Did you ever see a noodle, a noodle, a noodle,
Did you ever see a noodle like this one I see?
There are short ones and long ones and round ones and straight ones.
Did you ever see a noodle like this one I see?

Did you ever see a noodle, a noodle, a noodle,
Did you ever see a noodle cook like this one I see?
There are hard ones and soft ones and thick ones and thin ones.
Did you ever see a noodle like this one I see?

Caution:

Watch the children very carefully around the boiling water.

Be sure the children don't eat the uncooked noodles.

Consultations:

Consult with the feeding specialist regarding any children who cannot chew and swallow noodles.

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to any ingredients in noodles, including eggs (if egg noodles are used).

Rice

Context:

Experiencing rice
Cooking rice

Content/Target vocabulary:

rice, water, hot pot, butter, paper, glue
listen, smell, taste, feel, look
wash, cook, eat
colors, small, fluffy, soft
in, out, on

Preparation:

Several days in advance, color some rice with food coloring.

Allow the rice to dry thoroughly. Store the colored rice in small cups.

Shopping list:

sacks of white and brown rice
a box of rice and ingredients (usually water and butter)

Other materials:

a stove or electric burner
a large pot
sheets of paper
glue

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and allow each child to reach into the sack, pull out a handful of rice, and put it on the wheelchair tray. Show them how to roll the rice beneath their hands. Discuss how the rice feels. Discuss the colors of the rice (brown and white). Assign communicative intent to each child's response to the rice.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle and assist each child in adding the ingredients for the cooked rice. While the rice cooks, complete the symbolic representation task. Return to taste the rice.

Symbolic Representation

Go around the language group circle and give each child a sheet of paper. Show them the colored rice, and let them choose the various colors they would like to glue on paper. Put glue on each child's paper, and glue the brown and white rice from the child's tray. Then glue the colored rice that the child has chosen. Hang the rice collages and comment on the beautiful artwork. Taste some of the cooked rice. Discuss each child's reactions to the taste. Assign communicative intent to their responses.

Sing "The Rice Song"(to the tune of "Mama's Little Baby Loves Shortening Bread"):

Mama's little baby loves brown rice, brown rice.
Mama's little baby loves white rice, too.
Mama's little baby loves brown rice, brown rice.
Mama's little baby loves white rice, too.
Don't bring potatoes,
Don't bring the bread.
Mama's little baby wants rice instead.
Mama's little baby loves brown rice, brown rice
Mama's little baby loves white rice, too.

Caution:

Be sure the children don't put uncooked rice in their mouths.

Watch the children very carefully around the boiling rice and the hot stove.

Consultation:

Even though rice is probably one of the least allergenic foods, consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children should not eat it.

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Eggs

Context:

Experiencing eggs
Cooking eggs

Content/Target vocabulary:

eggs, nest, bird, shell, frying pan, spatula, butter
listen, look, taste, smell, feel
break, mix, pour, fry, cook, eat, crack
white, gooey, yellow, stringy, scrambled
out, in, open

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a bird on a nest (one copy for each child).

Shopping list:

eggs
butter

Other materials:

an electric frying pan
an extension cord
a spatula
a glass mixing bowl
stirring spoons
a plate or bowl and a spoon for each child
one brown and one brightly colored crayon for each child
glue

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and allow each child to hold an egg. (Don't be afraid the egg will break; but if it does, clean up the mess—it probably was a better sensory experience.) Discuss the egg with each child. Allow the children to feel the eggshell's smooth texture. Go around the language group circle again, cracking the egg on the side of a clear bowl. Assist each child in watching as some of the egg comes out of the shell. See if the child can track the movement of the liquid from the shell down into the bowl. Do this so that each child sees a little of the liquid coming out of the eggshell. (You will need one egg for every three children.) Let the children see the empty shells and the change in the egg.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle with a bowl of eggs and a stirring spoon. Allow each child to assist in mixing the eggs in the bowl. Direct their attention to the sound of the spoon hitting the side of the bowl. Stand in the center of the group, and show the frying pan to the children. Put some butter in the frying pan, and assist the children in watching it melt. Drop some of the egg into the hot frying pan. Encourage each child to watch. This may be accomplished by standing in the center of the circle and tilting the frying pan in front of each child. Slowly pour small amounts of the egg into the pan while someone stands behind the child to keep the child from touching the hot frying pan. Direct each child's attention to the change in the texture of the egg as it cooks. Direct attention to the smell of the cooking eggs. Allow each child to taste some of the egg after it is cooked. Assign communicative intent to each child's responses to the taste of the egg and to the experience of watching the egg cook.

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a picture of the bird on a nest. Assist each child in coloring the bird a bright color and coloring the nest brown. Then assist each child in gluing a piece of the eggshell onto the egg in the nest. Discuss the texture of the broken shells. Discuss how birds lay eggs in nests. Assist the children in tactilely exploring their egg pictures. Hang the pictures around the room, and discuss the language group experience throughout the day.

Sing "The Egg Song" (to the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat"):

Break, break, break the eggs.
Break them in the bowl.
Mix 'em, mix 'em, mix 'em, mix 'em.
Mix 'em as you go.

Fry, fry, fry the eggs.
Fry them in the pan.
Happily, happily, happily, happily
Eat them as we can.

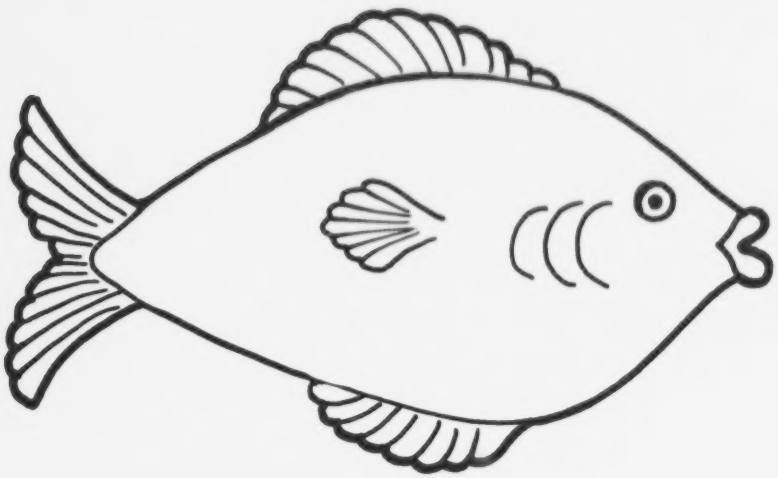
Caution:

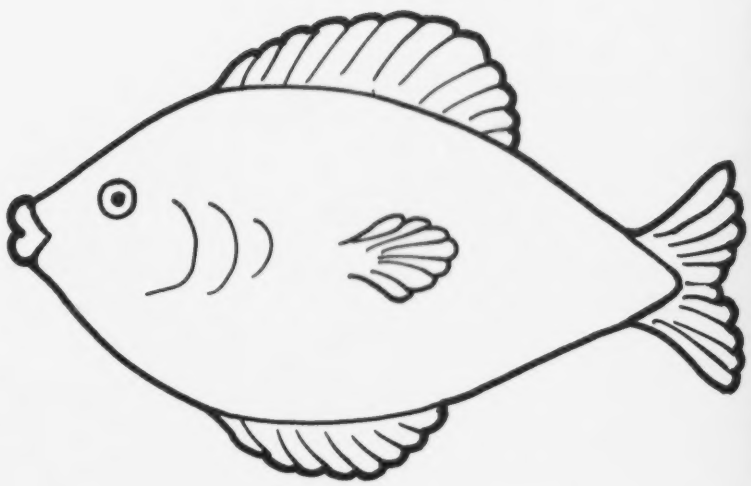
Watch the children closely to be sure they don't get burned.

Consultation:

Check with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to eggs.

PATTERN FOR FISH





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Fish

Context:

Watching a fish
Eating tuna fish
"Going fishing"

Content/Target vocabulary:

fish, pole, spoon, bowl, glitter
look, smell, touch, feel, listen, taste
swim, mix, eat, fish, glue
slippery, shiny, orange, pretty
in, around, up, down

Preparation:

Bring a goldfish in a clear bowl of water.

Make a "fishing pole" from a stick and a piece of string.

Photocopy the fish pattern on orange construction paper (one copy for each child).

Cut out the fish.

Bring a large poster board.

Shopping list:

a can of tuna fish
salad dressing

Other materials:

a can opener
a glass mixing bowl
a stirring spoon
a spoon for each child
tape
blue crayons
glue
glitter

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the children the goldfish in the bowl. Discuss how the fish looks and moves. Assign communicative intent to each child's reactions to the fish. Discuss how it breathes, lives, eats, and sleeps in the water. Put a little food in the top so that the fish moves to the top of the water. Assign communicative intent to each child's gazing, gesturing, and vocalizing patterns pertaining to the fish.

Active Participation

Open the can of tuna fish, drain it, and put it in a clear mixing bowl. Go around the language group circle and have each child stir some salad dressing into the tuna fish. Discuss how it smells and looks. Taste the tuna fish and discuss each child's reaction to the taste. Then go around the language group circle carrying a piece of poster board and a fishing pole. Have each child drop the fishing pole line behind the poster board as if putting the line into water to catch a fish. Tape or clip an orange cutout of a goldfish onto the line. Pull on the line and assist the child in "pulling in a fish." Assign meaning to all responses to the task.

Symbolic Representation

Go around the language group circle and assist the children in gluing the orange fish cutouts that they caught onto the poster board. Then assist them in coloring the background blue and gluing some glitter on the fish. Discuss each child's reactions to the task. Hang the poster in the classroom, and discuss the language group activities throughout the day. Sing "The Fish Song" (to the tune of "Camptown Races"):

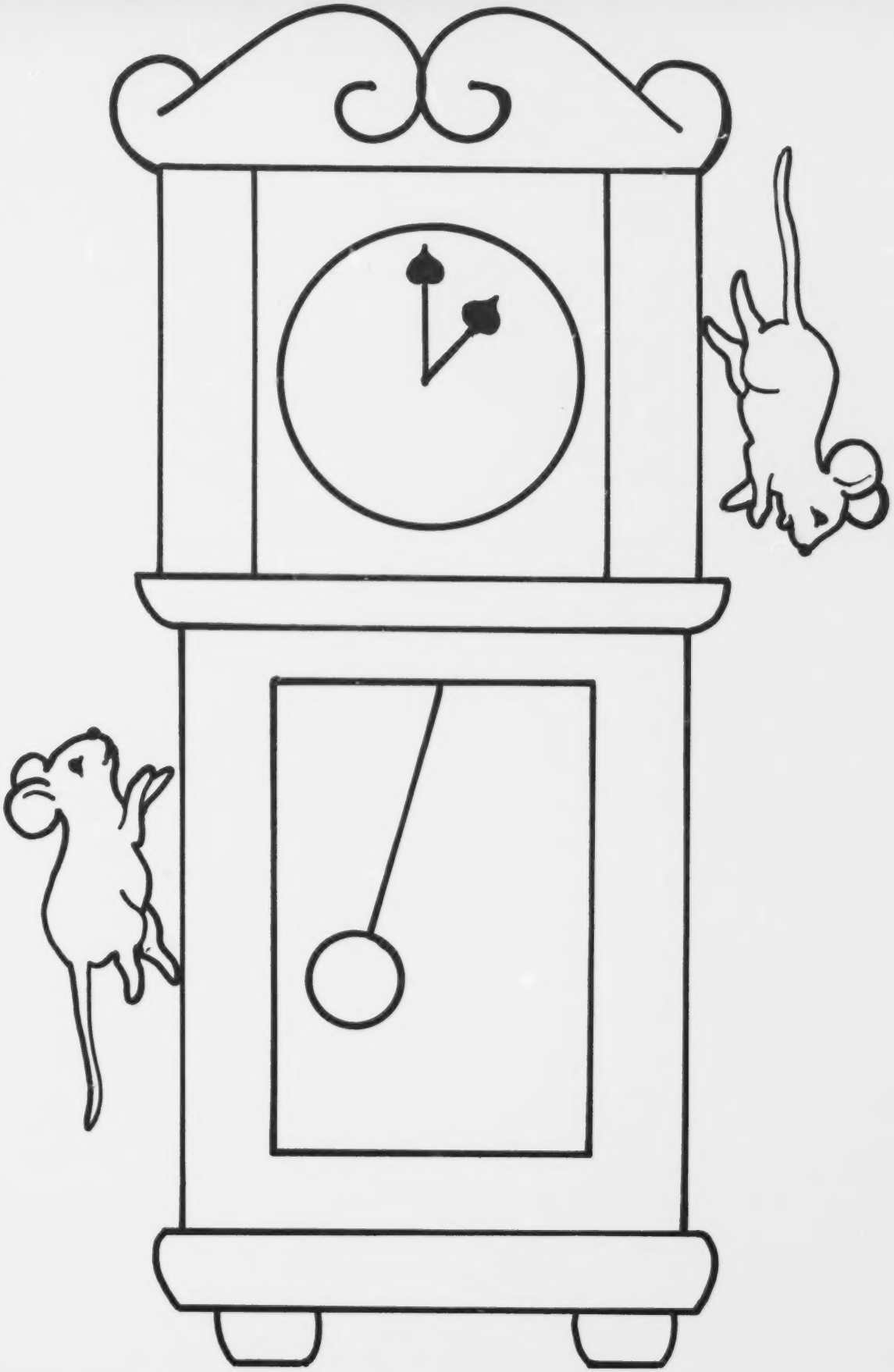
Let's go fishing in the brook.
Doo-da doo-da.
Let's go fishing with a hook.
Oh, doo-da-day.
Gonna fish all night,
Gonna fish all day.
Make fish salad in a bowl.
Sing oh, doo-da-day.

Caution:

Make sure the children don't get glitter in their eyes or mouths.

Consultation:

Consult medical staff to determine whether any children should not eat tuna salad.



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Clocks

Context:

Experiencing a clock
Making a clock

Content/Target vocabulary:

clock, alarm, clock face, arms, hands
listen, look, feel
ring, tick, set (the clock or the alarm), turn
loud, soft, round, square, tall
screw, on, around

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a grandfather clock (one copy for each child).

Ask staff members to bring in wind-up alarm clocks for the class to use for the day.

Make a paper-plate clock face for each child. Write the numbers 1 through 12 around the paper plate. Cut out two hands for each clock. Punch a hole in the center of the clock and at one end of each clock hand.

Materials:

paper plates
a brad for each clock
crayons

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the various wind-up alarm clocks to the children. Encourage each child to experience the clock by listening to it tick and feeling its vibration. Direct each child's attention to the face of the clock, and turn the knobs so the hands move. Discuss how the hands go around the clock. Show the children how to manipulate the hands on the clock. Children with better fine motor control may try to turn the hands of the clock, using the knobs.

Active Participation

Play a game by assisting the children to pass a clock around the language group circle. The teacher holds an alarm clock, which has been set to ring so that each child has the opportunity of holding the clock when it goes off. You may want to warn the children just before the alarm rings, to prevent startling. Keep the game fun, and try to have the children participate independently by passing the clock around.

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a paper-plate clock face. Assist the children in coloring the clocks. Then assist them in putting the hands on each clock with the brad. Help each child turn the hands in the circle around the clock. Count the numbers with the child, and assist the child in moving the arms while each number is said. Hang the clocks around the room, and again listen to the various rings of the real alarm clocks. Discuss the language group event throughout the day.

Give each child a picture of the grandfather clock. Assist the children in coloring the grandfather clock and in coloring the mice.

As you chant "Hickory-Dickory-Dock," use the child's finger to trace the motion of the mouse.

Hickory-dickory-dock,
The mouse ran up the clock.
The clock struck one,
The mouse ran down.
Hickory-dickory-dock.

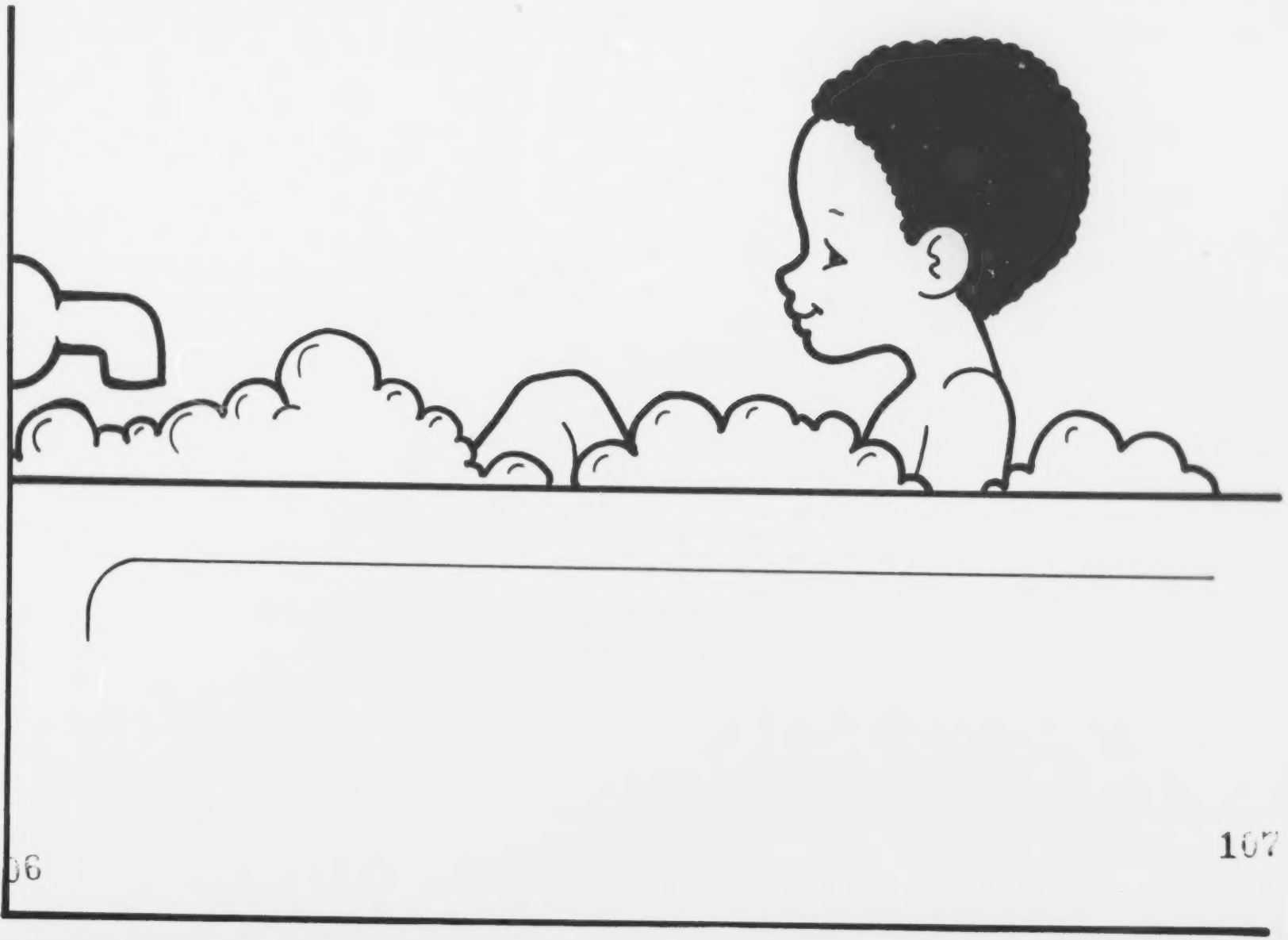
Hang the clock pictures next to the children's clock faces.

Caution:

Some children may have hypersensitive responses to the ringing of the alarm clocks. If you see a child continuously startling, remove the child from that auditory stimulation. In some children, it may elicit seizures.

Consultation:

Consult with staff members regarding appropriate levels of auditory stimulation for each child.



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Bubbles

Context:

Experiencing bubbles
Splashing bubbles
Blowing bubbles

Content/Target vocabulary:

bubbles
touch, look, listen
splash, blow, touch, break, catch, fly, float
big, small, many, some, one, round
on, over, under, near, next to, up, down

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a child sitting in a bathtub (one copy for each child).

Collect styrofoam bubble-type packing material

Shopping list:

a bottle of bubble solution and a wand
bubble bath

Other materials:

a dishpan of water
construction paper
scissors
glue

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and blow bubbles to the children. As you blow the bubbles, label the child's body parts: "Here comes the bubble. It's on _____'s arm. On your arm. Touch the bubble on your arm." Go around the circle several times, and attempt to have the other children watch during each child's turn. Attempt to elicit anticipation from the children regarding their turn and the direction of the next bubbles following each verbal cue.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle and help the children blow bubbles by themselves. Tell the children to blow the bubble onto your hand or arm or body part. If the child cannot blow bubbles, assist in waving the wand to make bubbles. Go around the language group circle again, carrying a pan of warm water with bubble bath in it. Have the children watch the bubbles in the dishpan while you splash the bubbles. Tell the children, "You can splash bubbles, too!" Encourage each child to take a turn splashing in the pan of bubbles. Show the children how to scoop up a handful of bubbles and clap their hands to try to break the bubbles. Encourage them to blow a handful of bubbles to one another.

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a picture of the child sitting in the bathtub. Assist the children in gluing the picture onto a piece of colored construction paper. Then assist them in gluing the styrofoam "bubbles" onto the picture as if the bubbles are coming out of the top of the bathtub. Hang the pictures on the bulletin board. Discuss the language group activities and the events of the language group.

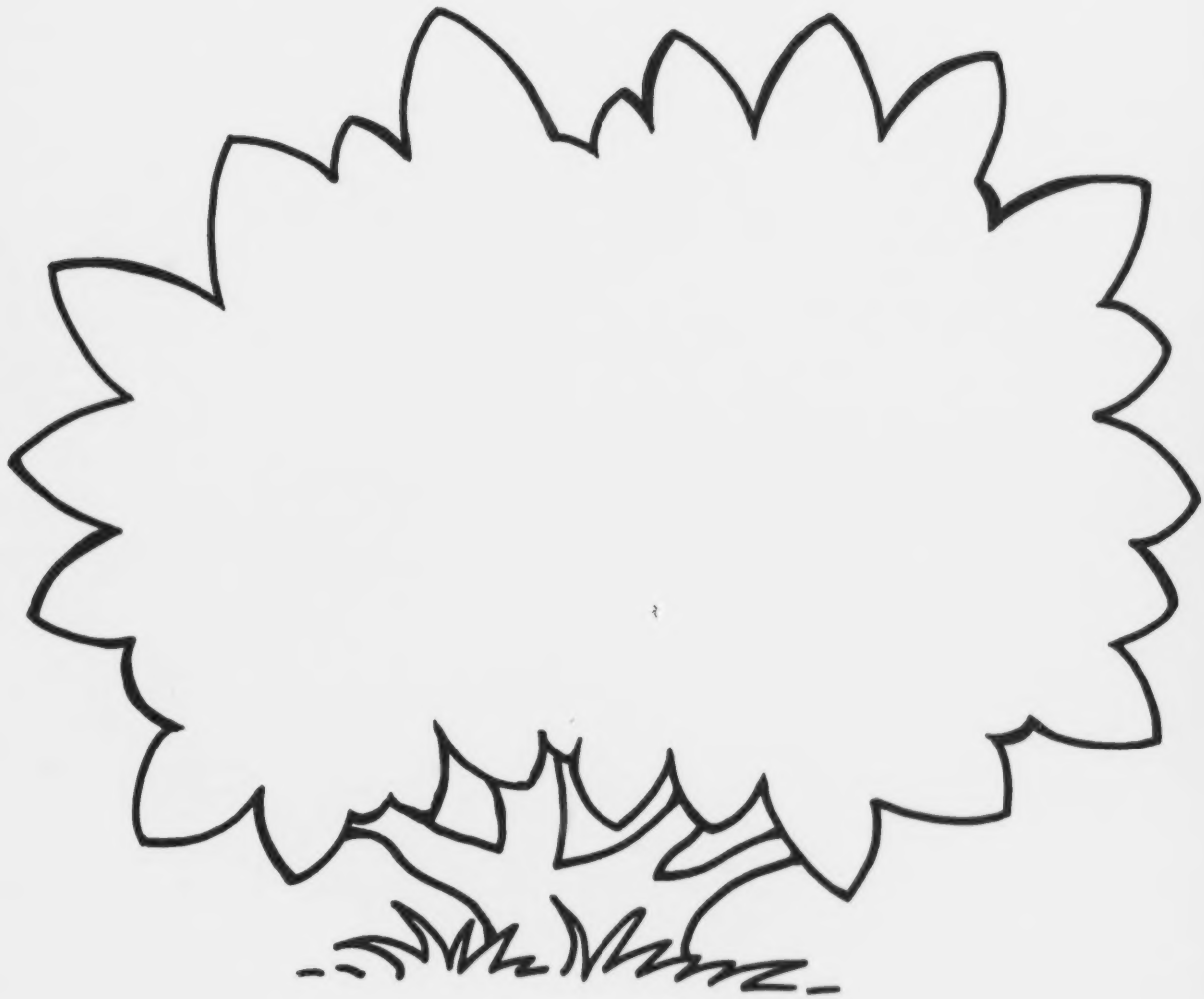
Sing "I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles."

Caution:

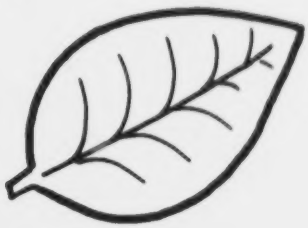
Don't let the children get bubble bath in their eyes.

Watch for children who may try to drink the bubble bath water.

Be sure the children don't attempt to eat the styrofoam packing material.



PATTERN FOR LEAVES



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Bushes and Leaves

Context:

Experiencing various bushes
Making a bush arrangement

Content/Target vocabulary:

bushes, scissors, leaves, vase, branch
listen, look, smell, feel
cut, stick, glue
green, bristly, shiny, soft
in, on, out

Preparation:

Collect branches from a variety of bushes.

Photocopy the picture of a bush (one copy for each child).

Cut out one or two green felt leaves (see pattern) for each child.

Bring a gardening book or catalog showing different kinds of bushes.

Shopping list:

green felt

Other materials:

a large vase
scissors
glue

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the various bush branches to the children. Discuss how the branches feel and smell. Describe the visual characteristics of each. Assign communicative intent to each child's responses to the feel, the smell, and appearance of the various branches. Encourage each child to give and take branches and to hold up a favorite branch to show the other children.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle and have each child choose several branches and put them in the vase. Discuss each child's response to the activity. Have each child hold up the vase to show the arrangement after adding a branch. Display the arrangement in the center of the room, and discuss it.

Symbolic Representation

Go around the language group circle carrying the gardening book. Show the children the pictures of various bushes. Discuss the various characteristics of each bush and how it looks in the picture. Then go around the language group circle again and give each child a copy of the bush picture and one or two green felt leaves. Assist each child in gluing the felt leaves onto the picture. Hang the pictures around the room, and discuss the bush language group throughout the day.

Sing "The Bush Song" (to the tune of "London Bridge"):

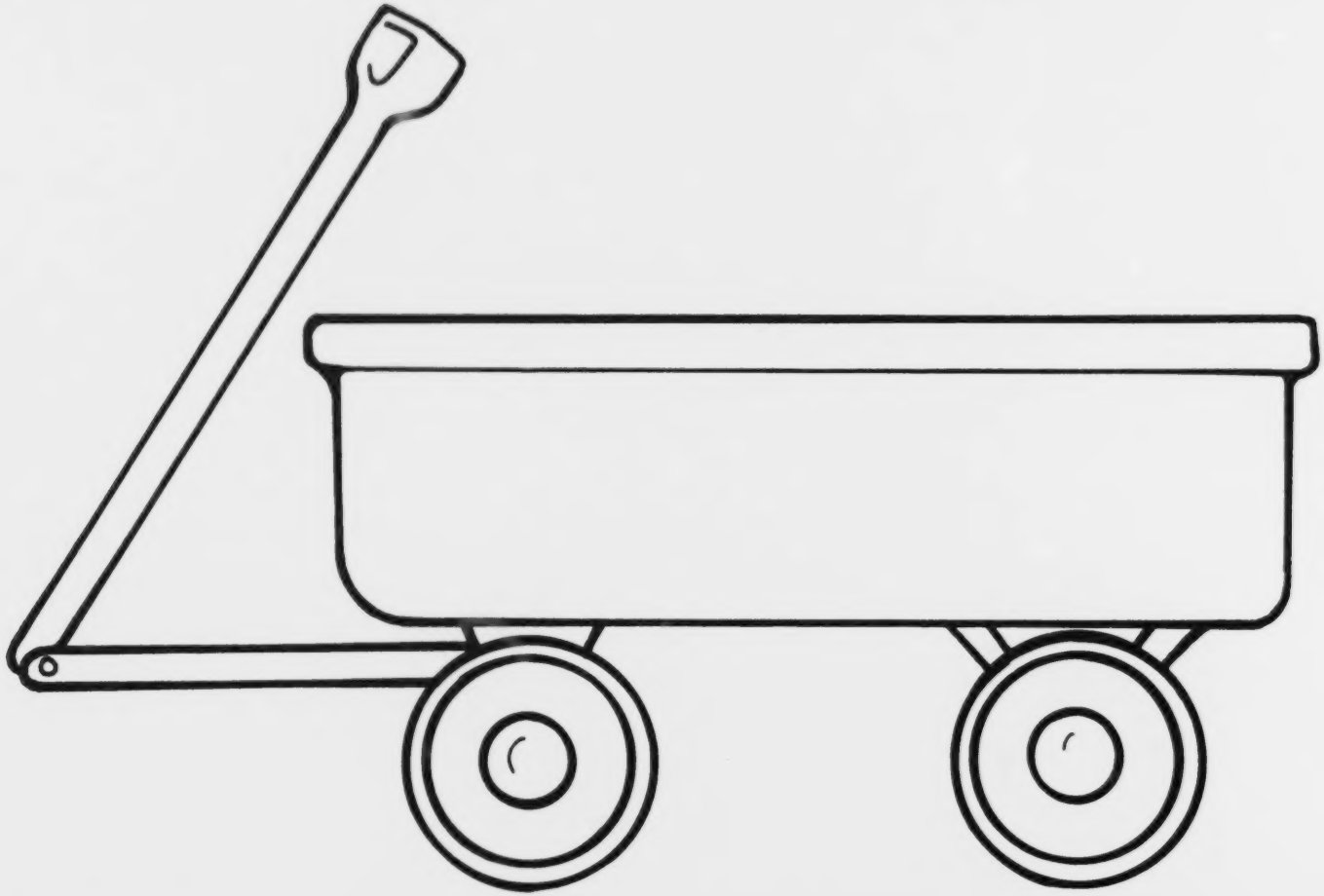
All the branches on the bush,
On the bush, on the bush,
All the branches on the bush are so pretty.
Put the branches in the vase,
In the vase, in the vase.
Put the branches in the vase. Oh, how pretty.

Caution:

Make sure the children do not put the leaves or the branches in their mouths.

Consultation:

Check with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to bushes and leaves.



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Paint

Context:

Experiencing paint
Painting pictures

Content/Target vocabulary:

paint, picture, paper, brush
listen, look, feel, smell
paint, splash, smear, brush
various colors, wet
in, on

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a wagon (one copy for each child).

Materials:

nontoxic fingerpaints
watercolors
several sheets of paper for each child
a large sheet of paper
brushes
cups of water
paper towels for cleanup

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the children the watercolors. Assist them in choosing a color for fingerpainting. Give a sheet of paper to each child. Assist them in dipping their fingers into the paint and fingerpainting. Discuss each child's reaction to the task. Discuss the texture of the paint and the colors used. Have each child show the finished picture to the other children. Hang the pictures around the room. Have each child participate in cleaning up the work area.

Active Participation

Bring out the large piece of paper. Go around the language group circle and assist each child in dipping a brush into water, choosing a watercolor, and stroking the brush on the paper. Discuss the pictures, the colors used, the sweeping motions of the brush, and each child's reaction to the task. After each child adds to the picture, show it to the other children in the group. Hang the communal picture in the room, and discuss the painting task. Discuss how various things in the room have been painted, such as the walls and tables. Give each child a picture of the wagon. Assist each child in choosing a color and in painting the wagon picture.

Sing "The Paint Song" (to the tune of "Skip To My Lou"):

Little wagon painted blue (*or whatever color the child has chosen*),
Little wagon painted blue,
Little wagon painted blue,
Paint with the brush my darling.

Caution:

Be sure the children don't try to eat the paint.

Consultation:

Consult with the occupational therapist to determine each child's optimum level of fine motor functioning for this task.

Books

Context:

Sharing a photograph album or scrapbook
Making a classroom book

Content/Target vocabulary:

book, pictures, paper, pens
listen, look, feel
read, write, open, close, show, trace, glue
pretty, mine, his, hers
in, on

Preparation:

Have each child bring a family photograph album and a picture of himself or herself (or take the children's pictures ahead of time).

Materials:

several children's books with pictures and other types of sensory stimulation (Scratch-n-Sniff, textured parts, three-dimensional pictures, and so on)
several sheets of paper for each child
two sheets of poster board, each 9" x 12"
glue
colored pens
a paper punch
three rings

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the books to the children. Discuss the pictures and the content. Discuss the various sensory aspects of each book, and assist the children in opening, closing, and turning the pages of the book independently. Have each child hold up a favorite picture for the other children to look at. Assign communicative intent to the children's reactions to the various books.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle and tell the children, "We are going to make our own book about our classroom." Assist the children in tracing around one of their hands on a piece of paper and in gluing their photograph above it. Let the child choose a favorite color of pen from one, two, or three (depending on the child's abilities). Using the child's choice of pen, write the child's hair and eye colors, favorite foods, favorite activities, and favorite toys. Collect the children's pages. Pass around the front and back poster board covers, and assist each child in coloring on the poster board. Punch three holes through the covers and all pages. Bind the pages together, using three rings. Then take the children to another classroom and show the classroom book to another teacher and to other children.

Symbolic Representation

Return to the classroom. Have the children take out the photograph albums they brought to class. Carry the books around the language group circle, and discuss them with each child.

Sing "The Book Song" (to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb"). Use each child's name in place of "Mary."

Mary had a little book,
Little book, little book.
Mary had a little book.
She shared it with a friend.

Snow

Context:

Experiencing snow
Making snowballs

Content/Target vocabulary:

snow, bucket, snowballs, mittens
feel, taste, look, smell, listen
melt, pack, string, hang
cold, white, soft, flaky, shiny, glisten
in, out, on

Preparation:

Cut a circle of white paper for each child. Fold it in half.

Bring a pair of old mittens on a string.

Be sure each child has a pair of mittens.

Shopping list:

artificial snow

Other materials:

a bucket of fresh snow
a scooping spoon
scissors
tape
string

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle carrying a bucket of fresh snow. Put a scoop of snow on each child's wheelchair tray or work station. Discuss how the snow shines or glistens. Discuss how the snow is made of many little flakes. Talk about how cold the snow feels. Let the snow melt on the child's wheelchair tray. Discuss how it melts. Assign meaning to the child's reactions to the snow and to the various tasks. Allow the children to smell the snow and (if the snow is clean) let them taste it. Discuss their reactions.

Active Participation

Put mittens on the children. Go around the language group circle again with the bucket of snow. Allow the children to put their hands in the snow. Assist them in making snowballs. Discuss how the snow packs and sticks together. Discuss how the snow sticks to their mittens. Discuss how the mittens keep their hands from being cold. Have each child show the snowball to the next child. Go around the language group circle and ask each child to throw the snowball into the bucket (thereby collecting the extra snow and eliminating some of the mess). Assign meaning to each child's reactions. Go around the language group circle again with a pair of old mittens on a string. Assist each child in spraying artificial snow on the mittens. Discuss how the can contains pretend snow and that the pretend snow also sticks to the mittens. Display the mittens dangling by the string.

Symbolic Representation

Go around the language group circle and assist the children in cutting patterns into the rounded edge of the folded paper. Then assist each child to cut small indentations into the folded side of the paper. Open the paper and show the child the snowflake. Discuss how snow is made up of many tiny little flakes that look something like that snowflake shape. Tape string on the snowflakes, and hang them around the mittens. Discuss the language group tasks throughout the day.

Sing "The Snow Song" (to the tune of "I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas"):

I'm dreaming of a white snowflake
Just like the one that I have made.
Oh, the snowflakes glisten
And children listen
To hear playing in the snow.

I'm dreaming of a white snowflake
Just like the one that I have made.
Oh, the mittens glisten
And children listen
To hear playing in the snow.

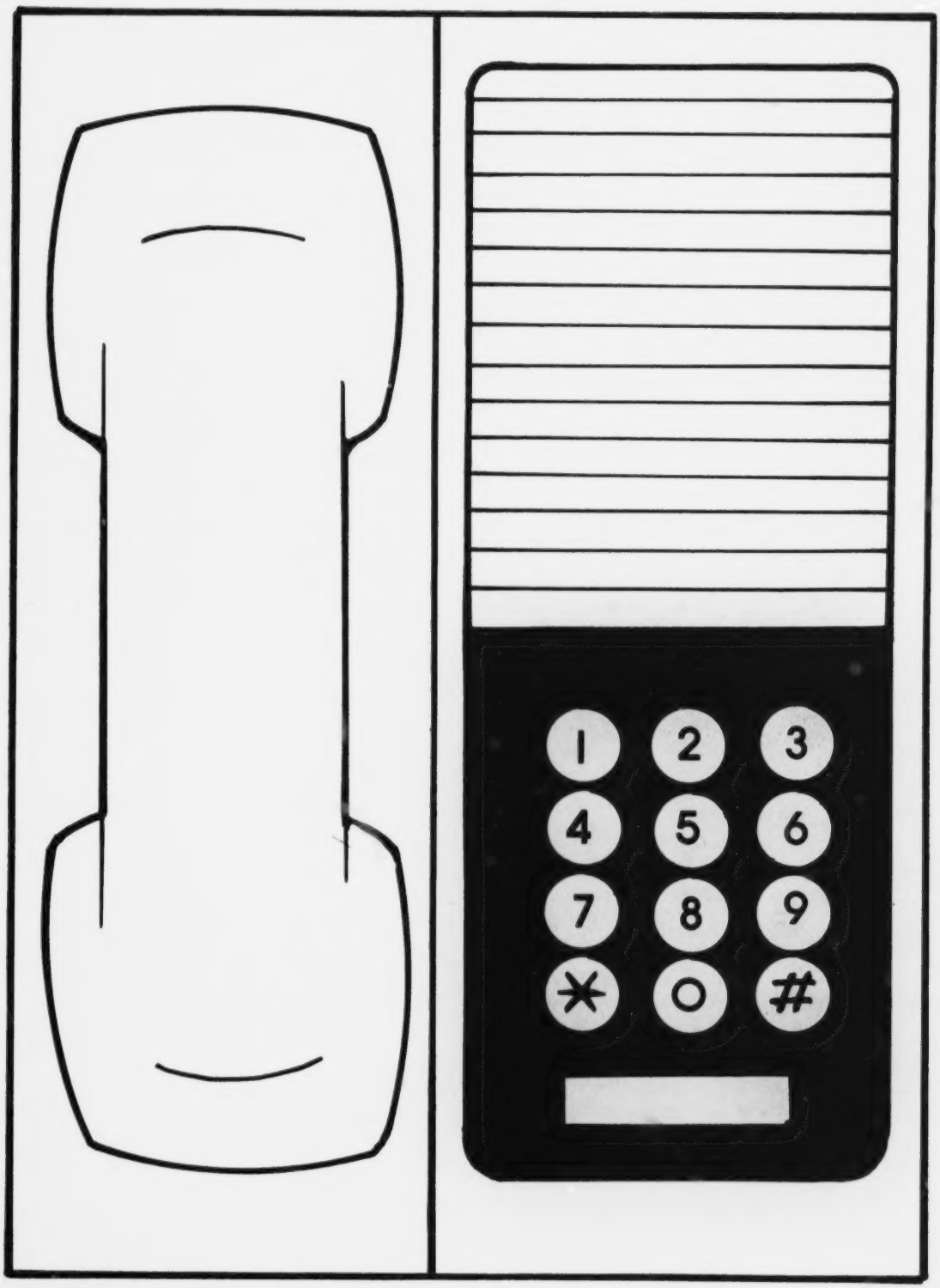
Caution:

Be careful that the children don't get artificial snow in their mouths.

When using scissors, watch the children carefully to prevent accidents.

Watch for children who are hypersensitive to cold or who have poor circulation in their hands. Don't let those children play with the snow.

Keep the event fun, and let the children be your guide to preventing overstimulation.



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Telephone

Context:

Experiencing a telephone
Making a telephone

Content/Target vocabulary:

telephone, phone, receiver, box
listen, look,feel
bring, pick up, put down, hang up, talk, color, glue
loud, soft
up, down, on

Preparation:

Photocopy the telephone pattern (one copy for each child).

Record the sounds of the dial tone and a telephone ringing.

Materials:

a toy telephone
tape recorder/player
two tin cans with a string between them
two styrofoam or plastic cups with a string between them
crayons
scissors
glue
a shoebox for each child

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the children the toy telephone. Play with each child and the telephone. Let each child pick up the phone receiver, and then present the dial tone from the tape recorder. Show the child how to hang up the telephone. Then present the telephone ringing. Show the child how to pick up the receiver again. Play games of give and take, where the child gives the receiver to the teacher and then takes the receiver from the teacher. Show the child how to pass the receiver to the next person as if the call is for that child. Bring back the receiver and have the child listen to the dial tone and the telephone ringing. Assist the child in passing the entire telephone to the next child to have a turn.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle carrying the tin can telephone and the plastic cup telephone. Assist the children in talking or vocalizing into these cups. Have the children listen while the teacher vocalizes, and then have the child vocalize while the teacher listens. Discuss how voices sound in the cups. Assist the children in playing with the toy phones by passing them among themselves so that each child has several turns listening to other children's voices as well as vocalizing into the telephone.

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a copy of the telephone pattern. Go around the language group circle and assist each child in coloring and cutting out the telephone picture and gluing it onto a shoe box. Then assist the children in vocalizing into the box and hearing the amplification of their own voices. Discuss how each child's voice sounds in the box. Assist the child in feeling the vibration of the voice resonating in the box as well as the child's own voice vibration. Discuss the language group experience throughout the day. Allow the children to take home their telephone boxes.

Sing "The Telephone Song" (to the tune of "This Old Man"):

This old phone, it rang once.
All day long it rang just once.
With a ring-rang patty-wang, leave the phone alone.
This old phone rang at my home.

Caution:

Some children may have hypersensitive responses to the ringing of the telephone. If you see a child continuously startling, remove the child from that auditory stimulation. In some children, it may elicit seizures.

Consultation:

Consult with staff members regarding appropriate levels of auditory stimulation for each child.

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Brushes

Context:

Experiencing various brushes
Brushing teeth
Brushing hair

Content/Target vocabulary:

toothbrush, hairbrush, mirror, toothpaste, doll, teeth, hair
look, listen, smell, feel, taste
brush, wipe
colors, bristly, stiff, rough, clean, shiny
in, on, out

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a child with hairbrush and toothbrush (one copy for each child).

Have the children bring their own hairbrushes and toothbrushes to the classroom.

Materials:

an old hairbrush
an old toothbrush
a mirror
a doll
toothpaste
a washcloth
crayons

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the children a toothbrush and hairbrush. Allow them to feel the bristles. Compare the appearance of the bristles on the toothbrush to the bristles on the hairbrush. Compare the way they feel on the hands. Put some toothpaste on the brush. Have the children look in the mirror, and assist them in brushing the *reflection* of their teeth (not their teeth). Discuss how the bristles smear the toothpaste. Then use the wet washcloth to wash off the mirror. Go around the language group circle carrying the doll. Assist the children in brushing the doll's hair. Discuss how the hairbrush parts and separates the doll's hair. Assign communicative intent to each child's response to the task.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle and assist the children in looking in the mirror and brushing their own hair. Assist them in brushing their neighbor's hair (using that child's personal brush). Then assist the children in brushing the doll's hair. Go around the language group circle and assist the children in brushing their teeth while looking in the mirror. (To avoid a mess, don't use toothpaste.) Assist the children in watching the teacher and other students brush their teeth. Discuss the motion and action of the brushing. Discuss how the brushing feels. Assign communicative intent to the students' responses to brushing their own hair and to having their hair brushed.

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a picture of the child with the brushes. Assist the children in coloring the hair and the brushes the color of their own hair and brushes. Assist them in drawing a line from the hair brush to the hair and from the toothbrush to the teeth. Discuss the language group events. Hang the pictures around the room.

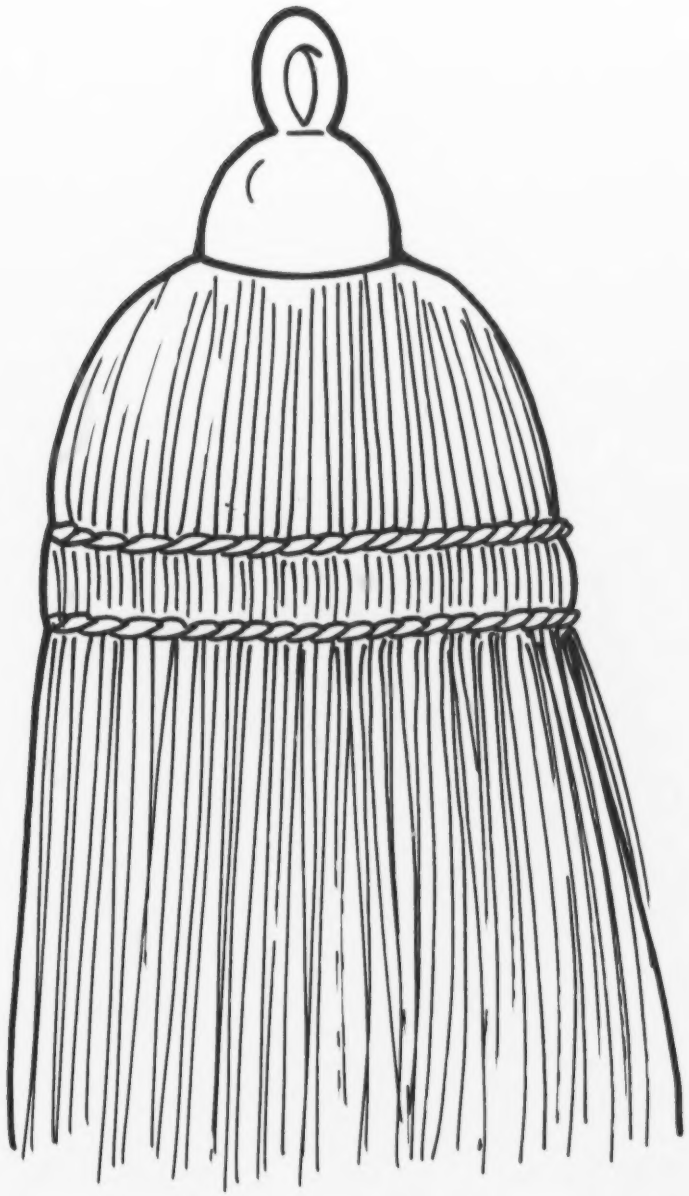
Sing "The Brushing Song" (to the tune of "This is the Way"):

This is the way we brush our hair,
Brush our hair,
Brush our hair.
This is the way we brush our hair,
So early in the morning.

This is the way we brush our teeth,
Brush our teeth,
Brush our teeth.
This is the way we brush our teeth,
So early in the morning.

Caution:

Some children may be tactilely defensive and might initially protest the brushing action. Be careful not to overstimulate those children. Give them time to potentially accommodate and integrate the stimulation, thereby reducing their hypersensitivity.



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Brooms

Context:

Experiencing a broom
Sweeping with a broom

Content/Target vocabulary:

broom, bristles
listen, look, feel
sweep
stiff, bristly, rough, clean
around, left, right

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a broom (one copy for each child).

Materials:

several whiskbrooms
a push broom
straw
glue

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the children a whisk broom. Have them feel the bristles and listen to the sound as the bristles sweep across your hand. Assist the child in sweeping the work area with the whiskbroom. Discuss how the broom cleans off the area and gathers all the dirt. Have the children use the broom to brush their wheelchairs or work stations. Assign communicative intent to the child's responses to the feel, the sound, and the action of the broom.

Active Participation

In this activity, those children who are in wheelchairs will be pushed around the outside of the circle, and those who are ambulatory will walk around the outside of the circle and back to the original place in the circle, while pushing the broom.

Sing "The Broom Song" (to the tune of "Skip to My Lou"):

Broom to the left, let's sweep the floor.
Broom to the left, let's sweep the floor.
Broom to the left, let's sweep the floor.
Let's sweep the floor, my darling.

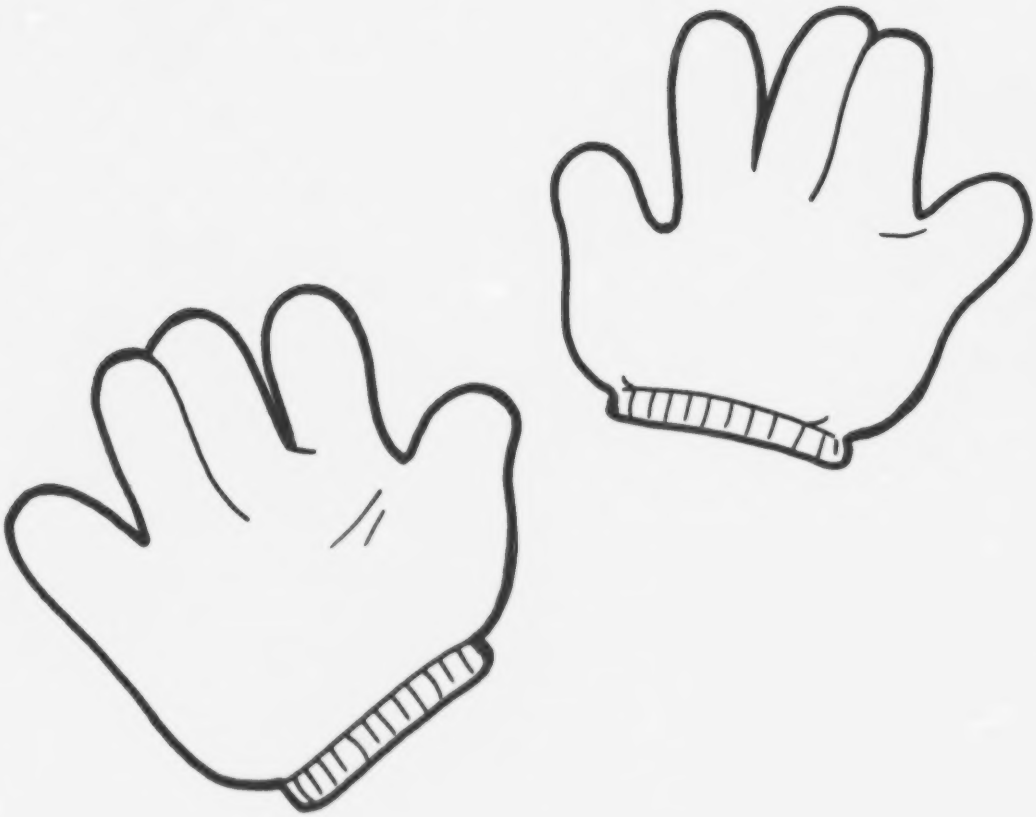
Broom to the right, let's sweep the floor.
Broom to the right, let's sweep the floor.
Broom to the right, let's sweep the floor.
Let's sweep the floor, my darling.

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a picture of the whiskbroom. Go around the language group circle and assist each child in gluing straw onto the picture. Hang the pictures around the room, and discuss the language group experience throughout the day. Summarize the group activity by singing (to the tune of "Skip to My Lou"):

Clean off the desk, use the whiskbroom.
Clean off the floor, use the push broom.
Sweep off the chair, use the whiskbroom.
Now it's all clean, my darling.

PATTERN FOR GLOVES



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Gloves

Context:

Experiencing gloves
Playing a game about gloves

Content/Target vocabulary:

gloves, poster, pin, pen
listen, look, feel, wear, watch, pin, trace
a pair, cotton, wool, leather (and other materials)
soft, fluffy
on, off

Preparation:

Photocopy the four parts that make the game poster (see pages 118-121). Trim the edges, and glue them together on a 17" x 22" piece of poster board.

Photocopy the pattern of a glove on construction paper. Cut it out to use in the game.

Bring several pairs of matching gloves in a box.

Materials:

scissors
glue
poster board
construction paper
a blindfold
colored marking pens
sheets of white paper

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the box of gloves. Assist the children in putting on two unmatched gloves. Have the children show the gloves to the other children by lifting up their hands. Discuss the glove color, texture, and material. Discuss how the gloves feel on the child's hands. Then take off the gloves and put three gloves (a matched pair and another glove) in front of the child. Encourage the child to pick up the two matching gloves or the two gloves that are the same. (This task can be expanded for the higher functioning child by adding more choices.) When each child has completed the task, put the gloves back in the box. Assist the child in passing the box of gloves to the next child.

Active Participation

Put up the game poster. Direct each child's attention to the poster. Discuss how the poster person looks and what the person is wearing. Say to the children, "There has been a weather change. It is very cold." Discuss how the poster person now needs gloves. Tell the children, "We are going to play 'Pin the Glove on the Poster' now." Demonstrate how the game is played, using one of the aides. Each child takes a turn in being blindfolded and pinning the glove on the poster. Cheer and clap and keep the task great fun during each child's turn. Discuss exactly where the glove was pinned each time, and each time draw the children's attention to where the glove should have been pinned on the poster. Assign communicative intent to each child's responses to the task and to taking a turn.

Symbolic Representation

Go around the language group circle and assist the children in tracing their hands and coloring the tracing. Tell the children, "This is the same size as your gloves." Go through the glove box and see if there are any gloves that fit the size of the hands. Have each child show the other children the picture and the glove that fits that hand size. Continue to discuss the kind of weather needed when gloves are worn. Hang the pictures around the room, and discuss the language group task throughout the day.

Sing "The Glove Song" (to the tune of "You Are My Sunshine"):

You are my warm gloves,
You are my warm gloves.
You keep my hands warm,
When skies are gray.
You'll never know, dear,
How warm they keep me.
Please don't take my gloves away.

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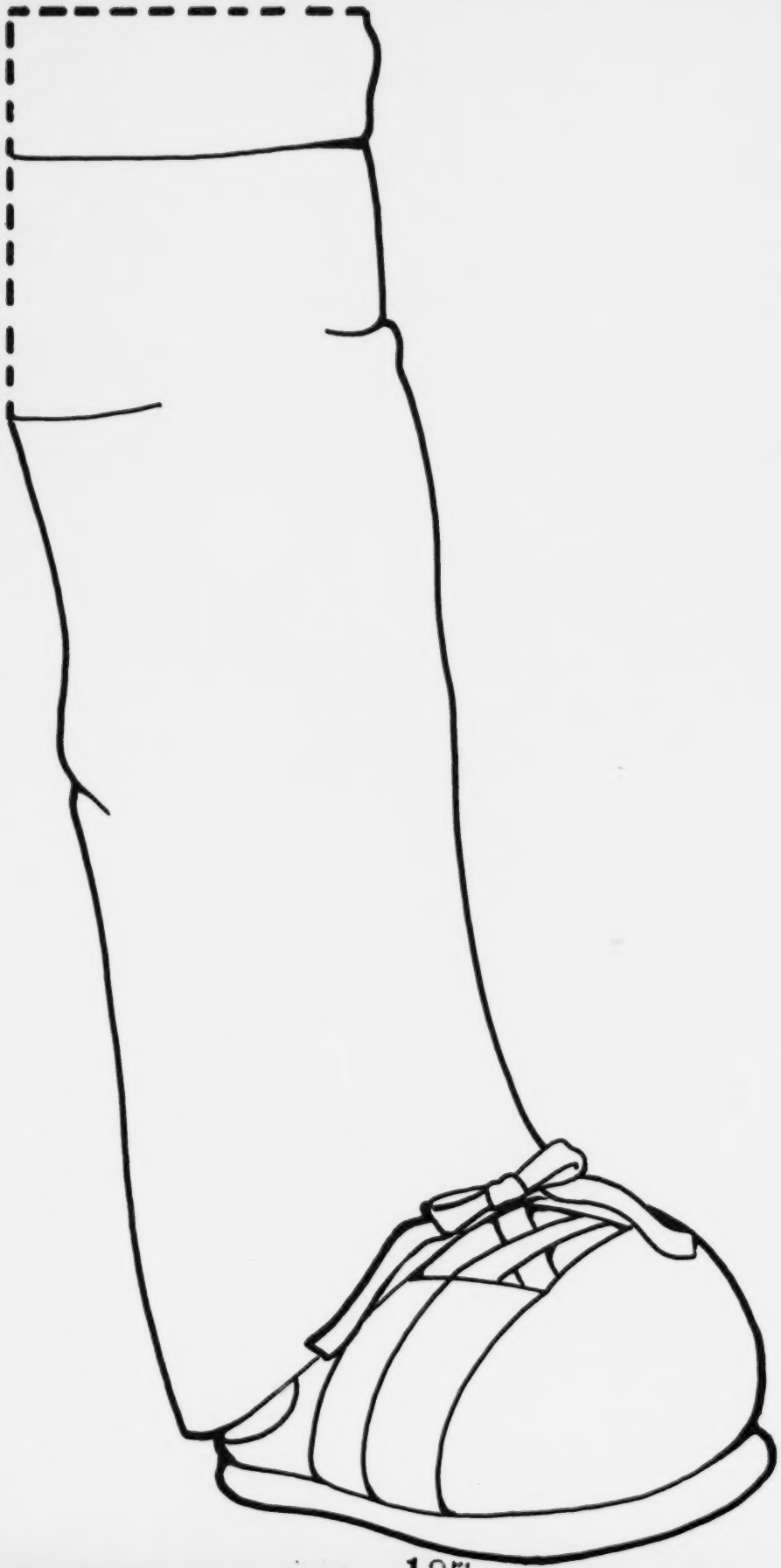

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Lotion

Context:

Experiencing lotion
Rubbing lotion on a doll

Content/Target vocabulary:

lotion, doll, water, bath, washcloth
listen, look, smell, feel
squirt, smear, rub, wash
creamy, smooth, white, cool
on, out, in

Preparation:

Collect magazine pictures of lotions and people putting on lotions.

Materials:

a bottle of lotion
a doll
a dishpan of water
a washcloth
poster board
glue
paper towels

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the children the bottle of lotion. Encourage the children to watch as you squirt lotion on your hands, rub your hands together, and rub each child's hands between your hands. Assist the children in smelling their hands and then smelling the lotion from the bottle. Discuss how the lotion feels and smells. Discuss the color and texture of the smooth, creamy lotion. Discuss whether it is cool or warm. Assign communicative intent to each child's responses.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle and put some lotion on each child's wheelchair tray or work station. Encourage the children to smear the lotion around on the tray, to rub their lotiony hands on their arms, and generally play in the lotion. Go around the language group circle and wipe off the wheelchair trays or work stations with a paper towel. Go around the circle again, and give each child a turn playing with the doll and lotion. Assist each child in squeezing out some lotion and putting it on the doll. Discuss where to put the lotion so that each child participates in putting the lotion on a different part of the doll (some on the face, some on one arm, and so on). Assist the child in using the dishpan of water and washcloth to give the doll a bath. After the doll has been bathed, assist each child in using the washcloth and water to wash off the work area. Then put some lotion on your hands and on the children's hands. Discuss each child's reactions to the various tasks and events with the lotion. Discuss how the lotion smears differently on the tray from on the doll. Discuss how the lotion is different on their skin from what it was on the doll's skin. Assign communicative intent to each child's responses to the lotion.

Symbolic Representation

Assist the children in making a collage of lotion pictures glued on the poster board. Hang the poster in the room. Discuss the language group experience throughout the day.

Sing "The Lotion Song" (to the tune of "Itsy-Bitsy Spider"):

The thick and gooey lotion comes pouring from the spout.
Squeeze the bottle hard and push the lotion out.
Rub with your hands and dry up all the cream,
And the thick and gooey lotion comes out the spout again.

Caution:

Do not allow the children to eat the lotion or get it in their eyes.

Watch the children closely for signs of tactile defensiveness, and allow those children to participate or not to participate accordingly.

Use deep pressure rather than a light touch.

Consultation:

Check with medical staff regarding any skin conditions that may preclude the children from using lotion.

Grass

Context:

Experiencing grass
Playing in the grass
Searching for items in the grass

Content/Target vocabulary:

grass, dishpan, flowers
listen, look, feel, smell
cut, reach, find, glue
green, soft, pretty
in, on, under, out

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of wildflowers on the following page (one copy for each child).

Collect a large amount of fresh-cut green grass. Put it in a dishpan.

Other materials:

plastic flowers
crayons
artificial grass
glue

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle carrying the dishpan of grass. Encourage the children to reach into the grass, feel it, and smell it. Discuss how green the grass is. Talk about each child's reactions to its smell. Put some of the grass on each child's wheelchair tray or work station.

Active Participation

Hide the plastic flowers in the dishpan of grass. Go around the language group circle and encourage each child to reach into the grass and find a hidden flower, pull it out, and show it to the teacher and the other children. Engage in give-and-take with the child. Let the child keep the flower, and move on to the next child in the group.

Symbolic Representation

Go around the language group circle and ask the children to push their flowers into the grass so the petals are on top of the grass. Discuss the various flowers in the dishpan. Give each child a picture of the wildflowers. Assist the children in coloring the picture with bright colors. Then assist the children in gluing some of the artificial grass onto the wildflower picture. Hang the wildflower pictures around the room, and discuss the language group activity throughout the day.

Sing "The Grass Song" (to the tune of "Farmer in the Dell"):

Oh, flowers in the grass,
Oh, flowers in the grass,
Hi! Ho! The derry-oh,
Flowers in the grass.

Consultation:

Check with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to grass.

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Flowers

Context:

Experiencing flowers
Planting flowers
Arranging a wildflower bouquet

Content/Target vocabulary:

flowers, vase, seeds, dirt, stems, leaves
smell, feel, look, listen
plant, put, push, cover, grow
pretty, various colors, soft
in, under

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of wildflowers (one copy for each child).

Gather wildflowers, and bring them to the classroom in a vase.

Place some navy beans in water, and let them sprout.

Fill small cups with dirt (one cup for each child.)

Make a paper flower for each child. To make a paper flower, fold a facial tissue like a fan. Tear the fan in half. Twist and fasten the pieces together at the center, using a bobby pin. Separate the ends and fluff them out to resemble a flower.

Other materials:

brightly colored marking pens
glue
poster board, 8" X 10" (one for each child)

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle carrying the vase of wildflowers. Let the children look at the flowers and smell them. Encourage them to touch the flowers. Label the parts of the wildflowers (stems, leaves, flower petals). Assign communicative intent to each child's reactions to the flowers. Determine each child's favorite flower by eye pointing or touching the flower of choice. Encourage each child to hold up the favorite flower to show to the other children.

Active Participation

Go around the language circle carrying the empty vase. Assist each child in placing several paper flowers into the vase. Discuss how the children are putting the flowers into the vase to make a bouquet. Assist the children in showing the flower arrangement to another teacher. Discuss how the arrangement looks, how pretty it is, its various colors, and the various textures of the flowers.

Give each child a small cup of dirt and several beans. Assist the child in planting the seeds by pushing a seed down and then covering it with dirt. Discuss how the seed will grow into a flower. Put the cups in the sunshine, and discuss the language group activity throughout the week as you watch for the emerging plants.

Symbolic Representation

Go around the language group circle looking at and smelling the paper flowers. Give each child a picture of the wildflowers. Assist each child in coloring the pictures. Glue each child's picture onto the poster board. Make a small slit in the picture, and assist each child in pushing a paper flower into the center of the bouquet to make a three-dimensional piece of wildflower art. Hang the pictures around the room, and use them whenever discussing the planted seeds.

Sing "The Flower Song" (to the tune of "Tiptoe Through the Tulips"):

Flowers,
Smell the flowers,
See the flowers,
Plant a seed and watch it grow.
See the flowers with me.

Caution:

Check with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to flowers.

Be sure the children do not put the flowers in their mouths. Many flowers are poisonous.

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Autumn Leaves

Context:

Experiencing dry leaves
Raking dry leaves
Playing with dry leaves

Content/Target vocabulary:

leaves, tree, rake, branch
listen, look, feel, smell
fall, crinkle, crunch, throw, rake, pull, glue, drop
colors and textures
in, out, up, down

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a branch with leaves (one copy for each child).

Bring two tree branches to the classroom, one with leaves and one without leaves.

Gather several buckets of dry leaves.

Other materials:

a rake
a garbage bag
glue

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle carrying a bucket of leaves. Assist the children in reaching in and crunching some of the leaves, then smelling them. Discuss how the leaves sound when touched and how they smell. Assist the children in throwing some of the leaves into the air.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle and show the children the tree branches with and without leaves. While showing the children the leafless branch, discuss how the leaves fall off the branches. Go around the language group circle and show the children the rake. Dump the remaining leaves in the center of the room, and assist each child in raking some of the leaves into a pile. (Use the wrong side of the rake to avoid scratching the floor.) Then assist the children in putting some of the leaves into the garbage bag. Discuss how the leaves feel, look, and smell. Assign communicative intent to each child's response to the various tasks.

Symbolic Representation

Go around the language group circle and give each child a picture of the tree branch. Assist each child in gluing two leaves on the picture. Hang the pictures around the room. On one side of the collection of pictures, put the branch with the leaves. On the other side, put the branch without the leaves. Discuss the language group activities throughout the day.

Sing "The Leaf Song" (to the tune of "Go Tell It on the Mountain"):

Go rake leaves in a big pile.
Throw the leaves up in the air.
Go throw them in a pile, 'cause
Autumn leaves are here.

Caution:

Don't let the children put the leaves in their mouths. Many leaves are poisonous.

Consultation:

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children have allergies that would be aggravated by participating in this activity.

Spoons

Context:

Experiencing spoons
Using spoons
Making music with spoons

Content/Target vocabulary:

spoon, glass, bowl, plastic, cup, pan, music
listen, feel, look
measure, mix, scoop, eat, play
small, big, glass, plastic, measuring, scooping, mixing
in, on, out

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of the measuring, mixing, and scooping spoons on the following page. (This picture is used for a matching task, so individual copies are not needed.)

Shopping list:

plain yogurt
applesauce

Other materials:

a bowl and a scooping spoon for each child
several measuring and mixing spoons
a large glass mixing bowl
several plastic cups, pots, and pans

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the different spoons to the children. Show them how the measuring spoons fit into one another, that the mixing spoon is a very large spoon, and that the medium-sized scooping spoon is the same kind of spoon we eat with. Allow the children to hit the spoons on the work table to hear how they sound. Have them hold up various spoons to show the other members of the group. As each child holds up a spoon, announce the kind of spoon it is (measuring, mixing, or scooping). Have the children pass the spoons on to their neighbors so that all spoons are passed around the language group circle.

Active Participation

Wash the spoons. Place the yogurt in a large glass mixing bowl. Go around the language group circle carrying the yogurt and the applesauce. Assist each child in measuring out a teaspoon of the applesauce and adding it to the yogurt. Tell each child, "You are using the measuring spoon. I want only as much applesauce as will fit in that spoon." Then go around the language group circle again, and give each child the opportunity to use the mixing spoon to mix up the applesauce and yogurt. Then place some of the mixture in each child's bowl, and give each child a spoon to eat with. Discuss how the children are now using the scooping spoon to eat. Each time they scoop, model the word "scoop" for them. Show them how they can stir the mixture and use the scooping spoon also for mixing. Discuss the various activities, and assign communicative intent to each child's responses. (The more involved children need extra assistance with this task.)

Symbolic Representation

Clean the children and the work area. Present the spoon picture for matching. Assist each child in matching the scooping spoon to the spoon we eat with, the mixing spoon to a large spoon, and the measuring spoon to the picture of the measuring spoon. After two or three children complete the matching task (with assistance as needed), sing "The Spoon Song" (to the tune of "Strangers in the Night"):

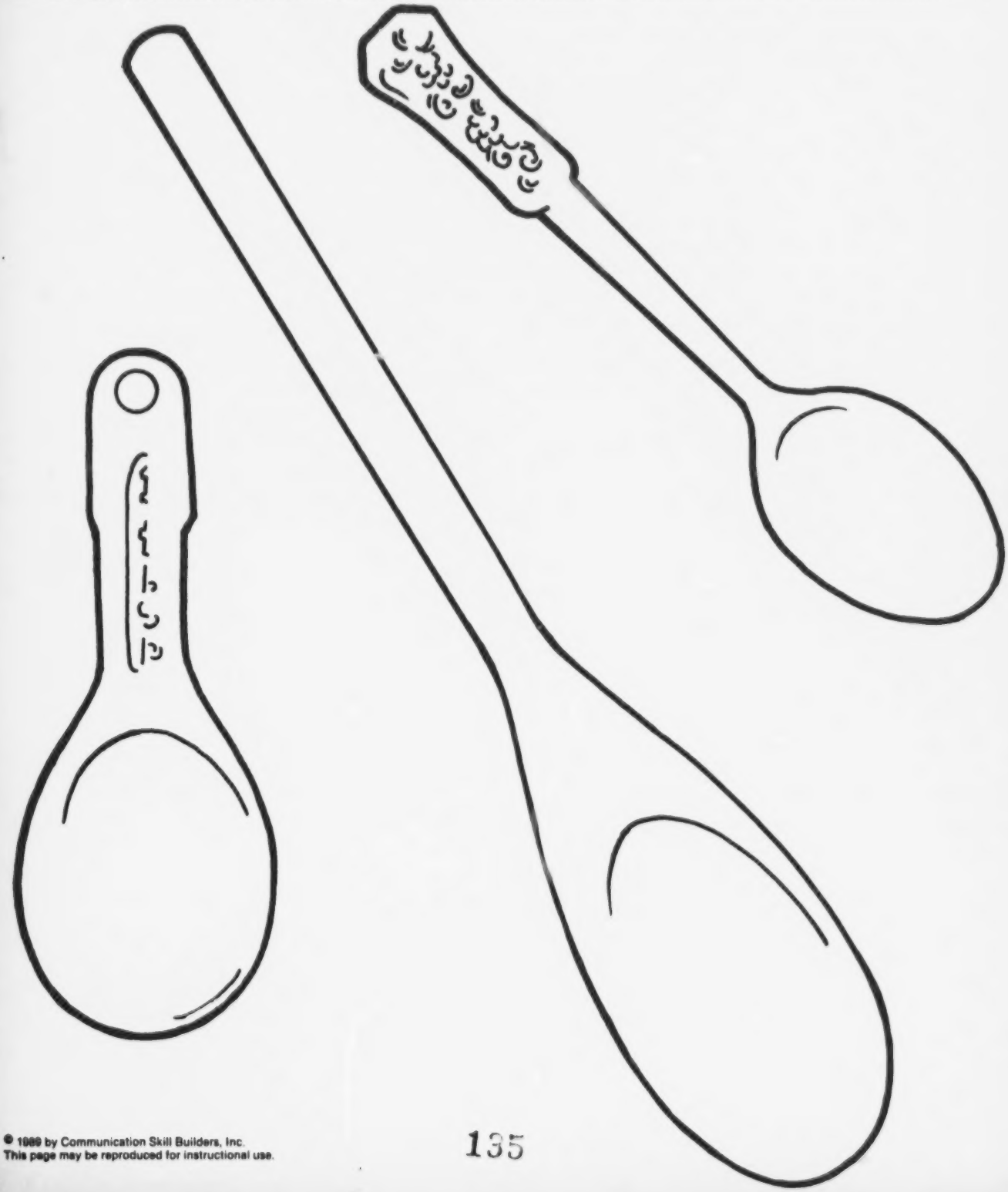
Snack time! It's all right!
Scoop, mix, and measure.
Snack time! It's all right!
Scoop, mix, and measure.
We'll be sharing snacks
Before the day is through!

As you sing the song, point to the scooping, mixing, and measuring spoons on the picture. Then go around the language group circle again, giving each child a clean spoon, a bowl, and a pot or pan. Show the children how to make sounds by hitting the sides of the bowl from either the outside or the inside, and the bottom or the inside of the pan. Discuss how the sounds are different. While the children make music with their instruments, sing "The Next Spoon Song" (to the tune of "As the Saints Go Marching In"):

Oh, while the music's marching in,
Oh, while the music's marching in,
Spoons will scoop and mix and measure
While the music's marching in.

Caution:
Some children may have hypersensitive responses to the music task. If you see a child having difficulty with the sounds, remove the child from that auditory stimulation.

Consultation:
Consult with staff members regarding appropriate levels of auditory stimulation for each child.



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Shoes

Context:

Experiencing shoes
Matching shoes
Matching shoes to people

Content/Target vocabulary:

shoes, doll, laces, buckle
look, listen, smell, feel
color, cut, glue
big, small, leather, canvas, brown, black, navy
on, off

Preparation:

Photocopy the pictures of a doll and pair of shoes (one copy for each child).

Bring various shoes to the classroom—a pair of men's shoes, a pair of women's fluffy slippers, tennis shoes, and other interesting footwear.

Have some dolls with doll shoes available in the classroom.

Other materials:

catalog pictures of shoes
poster board
scissors
glue
crayons

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Encourage the children to look at and feel the different shoes. Encourage them to divert their gaze among the different pairs. Discuss their reactions to the large men's shoes, the women's fluffy slippers, and the tennis shoes.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle and take off everyone's shoes. Encourage the children to watch as you remove the shoes. Tie each pair of shoes together by their laces or buckle them together by the straps. Describe each pair of shoes as you fasten them together. Give each child another child's shoes. Describe the shoes again. Point to the child to whom the shoes belong and say "Shoes. Her shoes. These are Sally's shoes." Encourage the child to follow the line of point. Go around the language group circle again with a doll, and model, "Are these hers?" and "Are these the doll's shoes?" as the doll's feet are placed in the shoes. Place a pair of doll's shoes on the child's wheelchair tray or work station, and ask, "Which are the doll's shoes?" Attempt to elicit any gazing response, depending on the child's level of functioning. Go around the language group circle again, this time returning each child's shoes. Compare the shoes to the doll's shoes. Ask the child, "Which are Johnny's shoes? Which shoes are yours?" Assist the child to divert gaze between the two pairs of shoes, and encourage the child to answer the question appropriately through gazing at or touching the pair of shoes. Have each child assist in putting on the shoes. Encourage the other children to watch.

Symbolic Representation

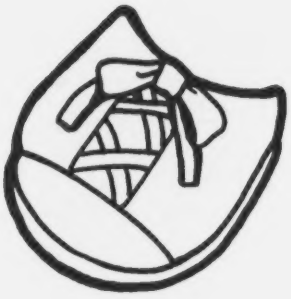
Go around the language group circle and show the catalog pictures of shoes. Make a collage of the different pairs of shoes. Give each child the picture of the doll and the shoes. Assist the children in coloring the shoes in the picture, cutting them out, and gluing them on the picture of the paper doll. Hang the pictures around the room. Discuss the language group activity throughout the day.

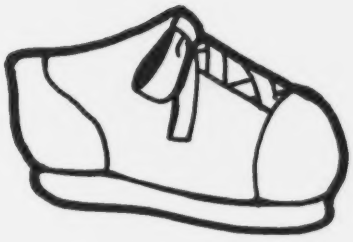
Sing "The Shoe Song" (to the tune of "Little Brown Jug"):

Ho-ho-ho, you and me,
Little brown shoes, how I love thee.
Ho-ho-ho, you and me.
Little brown shoes, how I love thee.
When I go walking down the street
I wear brown shoes on my feet.
I like brown shoes, yes I do!
Little brown shoes, how I love you!

Caution:

Be careful to return the correct shoes to each child.





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Hats

Context:

Experiencing hats
Wearing hats
Making hats

Content/Target vocabulary:

hat box, hat, ribbon, bow, brim, felt, mirror
look, listen, feel
wear, make
pretty, felt, paper, soft
on, off

Materials:

a box full of hats of various sizes
a hand mirror
paper plates
ribbon
a doll for each hat
magazine and catalog pictures of hats

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle carrying a large box of hats. Encourage each child to reach in and pull out a hat. Give each child a doll. Comment on the child's hat and doll, and encourage the child to put the hat on the doll. Discuss how the hat looks on the doll, and how it fits. Discuss where the doll might wear such a hat. Have the children hold up their dolls for the others to see.

Active Participation

Have everyone trade hats. Encourage showing, giving, and taking. Collect the hats again, and then ask, "Who else should have this hat?" and encourage each child to eye point to another child in the group. Have the children assist the chosen person in putting the hat on a doll. Pass around the dolls while the children take the different hats on and off the various dolls. Assist the children in passing around a mirror for their dolls to look into. Have the children choose a favorite hat by determining which hat seems to hold everyone's attention the longest. Play music, and pass the hat around the circle. The child who has the hat when the music stops leaves the game and must watch from outside the circle. The last child left wins the game.

Symbolic Representation

Assist the children in looking at the pictures of different kinds of hats. Assign communicative intent to each child's reaction to the pictures and to the hats. Give each child a paper plate. Assist the children in decorating the plates with markers and adding colored ribbons to their hats. (Attempt to elicit eye pointing to choose the ribbons.) Cut two small holes in the plate hat, string the ribbon through the holes, and tie the hat on the child. Assist the child in looking in the mirror. Discuss everyone's hat. Take turns putting on the paper hats, looking in the mirror, and modeling the hats to the group.

Sing "The Hat Song" (to the tune of "Who Wears Short Shorts?"):

Who wears a silly hat?
Dolly wears a silly hat.
Who wears a warm hat?
Dolly wears a warm hat.
Who wears a pretty hat?
Dolly wears a pretty hat.

Caution:

It is very tempting to make putting the hats on one another part of the activity of this language group activity. However, public health considerations probably prohibit this.

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Christmas Tree

Context:

Experiencing the Christmas tree
Preparing the tree for decorating

Content/Target vocabulary:

tree, branch, snow, shaving cream, cotton, glue
look, smell, touch, feel
cut, spray, put, stick, squeeze, drop
green, scratchy, fluffy
on, outside

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a Christmas tree (one copy for each child).

Shopping list:

Christmas tree
extra branches (one for each child)
evergreen scent
artificial snow
shaving cream
a styrofoam block or ball

Other materials:

cotton balls
glue

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show each child a tree branch. Discuss how the tree feels, smells, and looks. Label each child's reaction to the branch. Spray the tree with artificial snow. Encourage the child to watch as you spray the artificial snow on the tree. Spray each child's branch with evergreen scent. Go around the group and assist the students in smelling the sprayed and scented branches. Label their responses.

Active Participation

Assist the children in "building a tree" by sticking the children's branches into a styrofoam ball or block. Then tell the children, "We will spray shaving cream on our hands, and we'll put the shaving cream on our tree branches to have more snow."

Symbolic Representation

Give each student a picture of the tree. Assist each student in squeezing glue on the tree picture, squeezing glue on the cotton balls, dropping tree needles onto the tree picture, and putting cotton "snowballs" on the tree picture. Label each task as the student motorically participates to maximum ability. Encourage the children to show each other their pictures. Describe their reactions. Describe the stimuli presented. Comment on performance. Elicit gazing, gesturing, and vocalizing, and assign communicative intent. Tape the pictures on the windows. Look at the trees outside and the trees on the windows.

Sing (to the tune of "Oh, Christmas Tree"):

Oh, Christmas Tree,
Oh, Christmas Tree,
How lovely are your branches.
Your branches long,
Your branches green.
The prettiest tree
I've ever seen.
Oh, Christmas Tree,
Oh, Christmas Tree,
How lovely are your branches.

Caution:

Purchase a tree with soft needles.

When spraying scent, avoid contact with eyes and open cuts.

Be sure the students don't try to eat the shaving cream or taste the evergreen scent or eat the tree needles.

Consultations:

Consult with the occupational therapist as to each child's hand function and fine motor skills.

Consult with medical staff or records to determine whether any children have allergies that would be aggravated by participating in this activity.

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Christmas Tree Star

Context:

Making a star for the Christmas tree
Decorating the Christmas tree

Content/Target vocabulary:

tree, star, beads, bells, foil, yarn
look, listen, touch, feel, smell
rip, wrap, cover, ring, string, poke, push, tie, hang
shiny, pretty
on

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of the Christmas tree on page 134 (one copy for each child).

Trace the star pattern on paper plates (one for each child and one extra). Cut out the stars. Cover one star with aluminum foil. String beads and bells on a piece of yarn. Punch a hole at the top of the star, and push the yarn through the hole. Make a loop large enough to hang the star on the Christmas tree.

Other materials:

paper plates
scissors
aluminum foil
large beads
small bells that have a hole at the top
yarn
a paper punch
small gummed stars

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the star to the children. Discuss how the star looks, feels, turns, jingles, and shines. Label each student's reaction to the star. Discuss who seems to like it, watches it for a long time, tracks it, pushes it away, tries to crush it, or wants to hold it.

Active Participation

After each student experiences the star, tell the entire group, "Now we are each going to make a star. This is what we're going to do. First, we'll rip a piece of foil. Second, we'll wrap the foil around the star. Third, we'll write your name on the middle of the star. Then we'll string some beads and bells on a piece of yarn. We'll punch a hole in the top point of the star, and we'll push the yarn through the hole. Next, we'll tie a knot. Then we will hang the star on the tree." Give an undecorated star shape to each child. Assist the child in motorically participating as much as able. Label each step of the task, and comment on the student's performance. Attempt to elicit any gazing, gesturing, and vocalizing responses. Describe all responses and assign communicative intent. Encourage each student to show the star to other students. Prompt pointing to one another's star. Hang each student's star on the Christmas tree.

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a picture of the Christmas tree. Lick a gummed star and assist the student in gluing it on the top of the tree.

Sing "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star":

Twinkle, twinkle, little star.
How I wonder where you are.
Up there on the tree so high,
Like the stars up in the sky.

Caution:

Be sure the children don't put inedible objects in their mouths.

Consultation:

Consult with the occupational therapist regarding techniques for encouraging optimum hand functions.

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Clothes Moving in the Wind

Context:

Washing clothes and hanging them out to dry
Watching clothes move in the breeze

Content/Target vocabulary:

clothes, clothesline, clothespins, wash basin
listen, look, smell, feel
wash, hang, clip
wet, clean, fresh, dry
in, out, on

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a woman hanging clothes on the clothesline (one copy for each child).

Materials:

clothespins
a clothesline hanging outside
articles of clothing
a basin of water
doll clothes
fabric scraps
glue

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Take the children outside to a clothesline. When they are in a semicircle facing the clothesline, begin the language group activity by hanging an article of clothing on the line. Discuss with the children how the clothing moves in the wind. Have each child take an article of clothing. Assist the children in holding the clothing up and into the wind. Discuss how the clothing moves and ripples. Discuss how the wind feels on the children's faces and in their hair. Put some water on each child's hands. Discuss how the wind blowing on their hands dries the water.

Active Participation

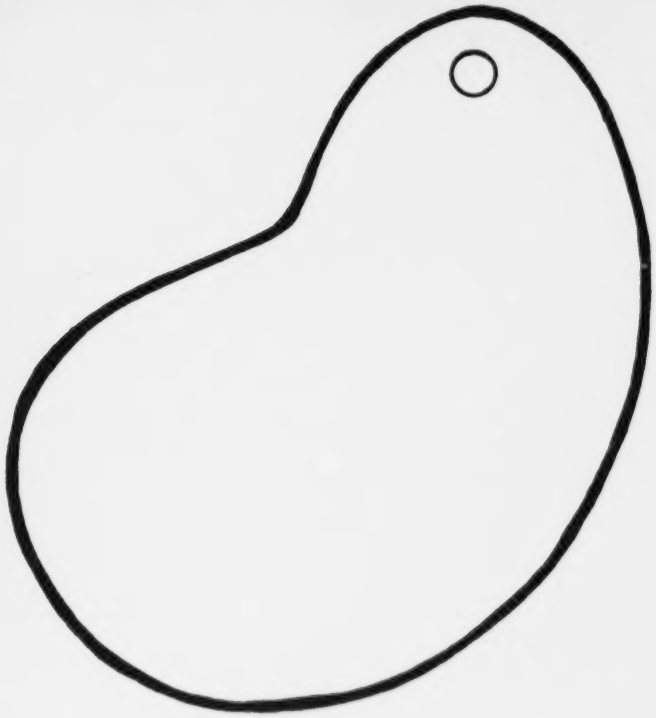
Go around the language group circle carrying the basin filled with water and doll clothes. Assist each child in washing the clothes. Discuss the washing of the clothes and how the water feels. Show the children how to wring the excess water from the clothes. Assist each child in using clothespins to hang the doll clothing on the clothesline. Discuss how each article of clothing moves in the wind. When every child has hung up an article, sit and watch the clothes flapping in the breeze. Discuss how the clothes will dry in the wind.

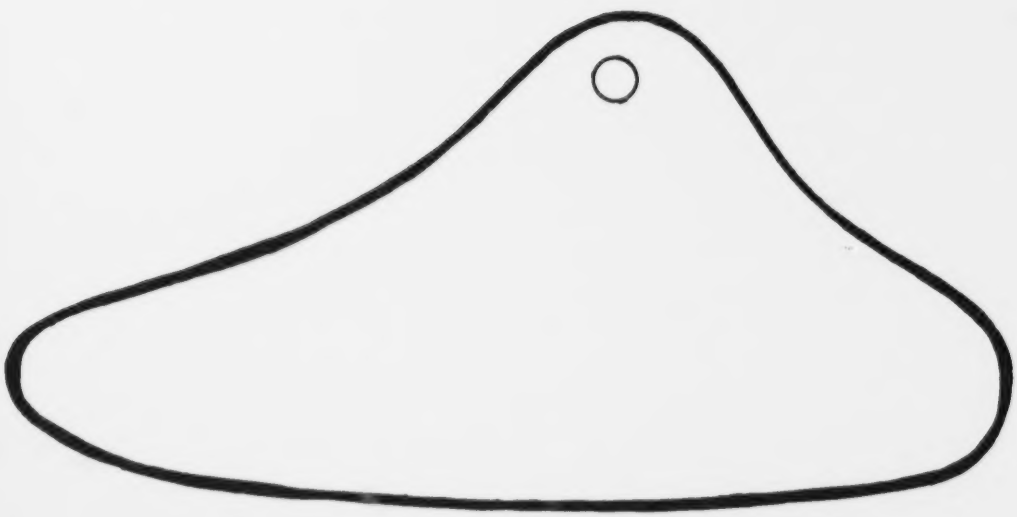
Symbolic Representation

Give each child a picture of the woman hanging clothes. Assist the children in coloring the dress and then gluing fabric scraps of various shapes to hang from the line. Hang the clothesline collages around the room, and discuss the language group activity throughout the day.

Sing "The Clothes Song" (to the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat"):

Wind, wind, blow the clothes
Flapping in the air.
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily.
Clothes are everywhere.





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Wind Chimes Moving in the Wind

Context:

Experiencing a wind chime
Making a wind chime

Content/Target vocabulary:

wind chime, fan, string, yarn, lid, pie plate
listen, look, feel
move, tinkle, dangle, string, push
shiny, various colors, metal (lid), paper (wind chime)
in, through, on

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a wind chime (one copy for each child).

Ask staff members to bring a variety of wind chimes.

Collect lids from jars (one for each child) and an aluminum pie plate. Drill a hole in the center of each jar lid; in the pie plate, drill one hole for each child in the language group. Make the holes large enough for yarn or macrame cord to pass through.

Shopping list:

colorful yarn or macrame cord
crepe paper strips

Other materials:

a fan
crayons
tape

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show each child one wind chime at a time. (You may want to go around the group several times, depending on the number of wind chimes you have available.) Encourage the children to look at each wind chime, assisting them in touching it and in making it tinkle. Hold up the wind chime and turn it for the children. Encourage them to watch it move and dangle. If the wind chime is not breakable and the child's motor skills are adequate, you may want to encourage the child to hold the wind chime. Hold the wind chime in front of the fan. Discuss how the wind chime sounds as it moves in the fan's fast breeze. Assign communicative intent to each child's responses to the wind chimes.

Active Participation

Discuss how the group will make a wind chime. Assist each child in stringing yarn or cord through the lid, tying the knot, and stringing the yarn through one hole in the pie plate. Assist the child in tying the knot. Hold the finished wind chime in front of each child. Encourage the child to look at the wind chime and touch it to make it tinkle. Compare its sound to the sounds of the other wind chimes. Show the children how to hold up the wind chime and turn it. Hold the wind chime in front of a fan and encourage the children to listen to its sounds and to see how it moves in the wind. Assign communicative intent to each child's responses to the wind chime. Hang the wind chime in the room, and discuss the language group activity throughout the day.

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a picture of a wind chime. Assist each child in coloring the picture. Tape the entire picture onto a strip of crepe paper. Hang the pictures from the ceiling. Discuss how they move in the wind, turning and spinning. Discuss how they make very little or no noise. Discuss the difference in textures and materials from the paper windmobiles and the wind chime.

Sing "The Wind Chime Song" (to the tune of "Yankee Doodle"):

Wind chime, tinkle! Keep it up!
Wind chime, tinkle dandy.
Hear the music, hear the chime,
And hope the wind is handy.

Caution:

When poking holes in the lids, be sure the instrument you use doesn't leave such a sharp edge on the holes that the children cut themselves.

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Pinwheels Moving In the Wind

Context:

Experiencing a pinwheel

Making a pinwheel move by blowing on it, spinning it, holding it next to a fan, and holding it in the wind

Content/Target vocabulary:

pinwheel, wind, fan
listen, look, feel
blow, spin, hold up, turn
shiny, various colors, fast, slow
in, on, out, up

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a windmill (one copy for each child).

Bring an electric fan to the classroom.

Other materials:

several pinwheels
crayons
string
tape
scissors

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the children a pinwheel. Show them how the pinwheel spins. Assist each child in blowing on the pinwheel by demonstrating and giving the child a turn. Show the children how to spin the pinwheel, and encourage or assist each child in spinning the pinwheel with a hand. Discuss each child's reaction to the manipulation task and to the spinning pinwheel.

Active Participation

Take the children outside. Assist them in holding pinwheels in and out of the breeze. Discuss how the pinwheels move in the wind. Talk about how they don't move without the wind. Show the children how to spin the pinwheels by blowing against them. Have each child hold a pinwheel against the wind and try to make it spin in the other direction. Discuss and assign communicative intent to each child's reactions to the task. Then go inside and assist each child in holding the pinwheel in front of the fan. Discuss how the fan makes a wind inside. Discuss how the wind outside turns the pinwheel and cools the air. Discuss how the fan inside does the same action.

Symbolic Representation

Go around the language group circle and give each child a picture of a windmill. Discuss how the windmill is like a large pinwheel. Talk about how they move in the wind like a pinwheel. Assist each child in coloring the windmill. Cut out each child's windmill picture, tape string on the picture, and hang it from the ceiling. Turn on the fan and discuss how the windmills move in the wind of the fan. Turn off the fan and discuss how the windmills stop moving.

Sing "The Pinwheel Song" (to the tune of "Blowing in the Wind"):

How many times can a pinwheel turn
So briskly in the wind?
Oh, and how many times can a pinwheel turn
So briskly in the wind?
The pinwheels, my friend, are blowing in the wind.
The pinwheels are blowing in the wind.

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Balloons

Context:
Experiencing a balloon

Content/Target vocabulary:
balloon, string, paper, glue
listen, look, feel
blow, tie, hang, glue, color
various colors, round
up, down

Preparation:
Photocopy the picture of a child with balloons (one copy for each child).

Cut construction paper circles matching the colors of the real balloons. Cut them the same size as the balloon in the picture. Make a circle for each child. (See pattern on page 146.)

Blow up a balloon.

Shopping list:
a bag of balloons of different colors
string

Other materials:
a black marking pen
glue

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the children the blown-up balloon and the balloons in the bag. Encourage each child to reach into the bag and pull out a balloon. Assist the child in stretching and pulling on the balloon. Encourage the child to watch as you blow up the balloon. Encourage the child to listen as you let some of the air squeak out. Stretch the balloon again, and let the child touch the balloon. Then blow up the balloon again and allow the child to feel it. Put each child's balloon on a table while you move on to the next child. Do not leave the balloons with the children. (See Caution, below.)

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle again and show each child a balloon. Tie a string on the balloon, wind it over your arm, and pull it up and down. Model to the children, "Balloon up, balloon down," while encouraging them to watch the balloon. Assist each child in throwing the balloon up, kicking it, and passing it around the circle. Suspend the balloons from the ceiling so one is hanging in front of each child, and encourage the children to bat at their balloons. Watch for breaking balloons. (See Caution, below.)

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a balloon picture and a construction paper circle that is the same color as the child's balloon. Glue the construction paper circle to the picture. Assist the child in gluing string onto the picture of a balloon. Write the child's name in the circle. Hang the paper balloons from the ceiling. Then remove the real balloons.

Have each child hold a balloon while you sing "The Balloon Song" (to the tune of "He's Got the Whole World In His Hands"):

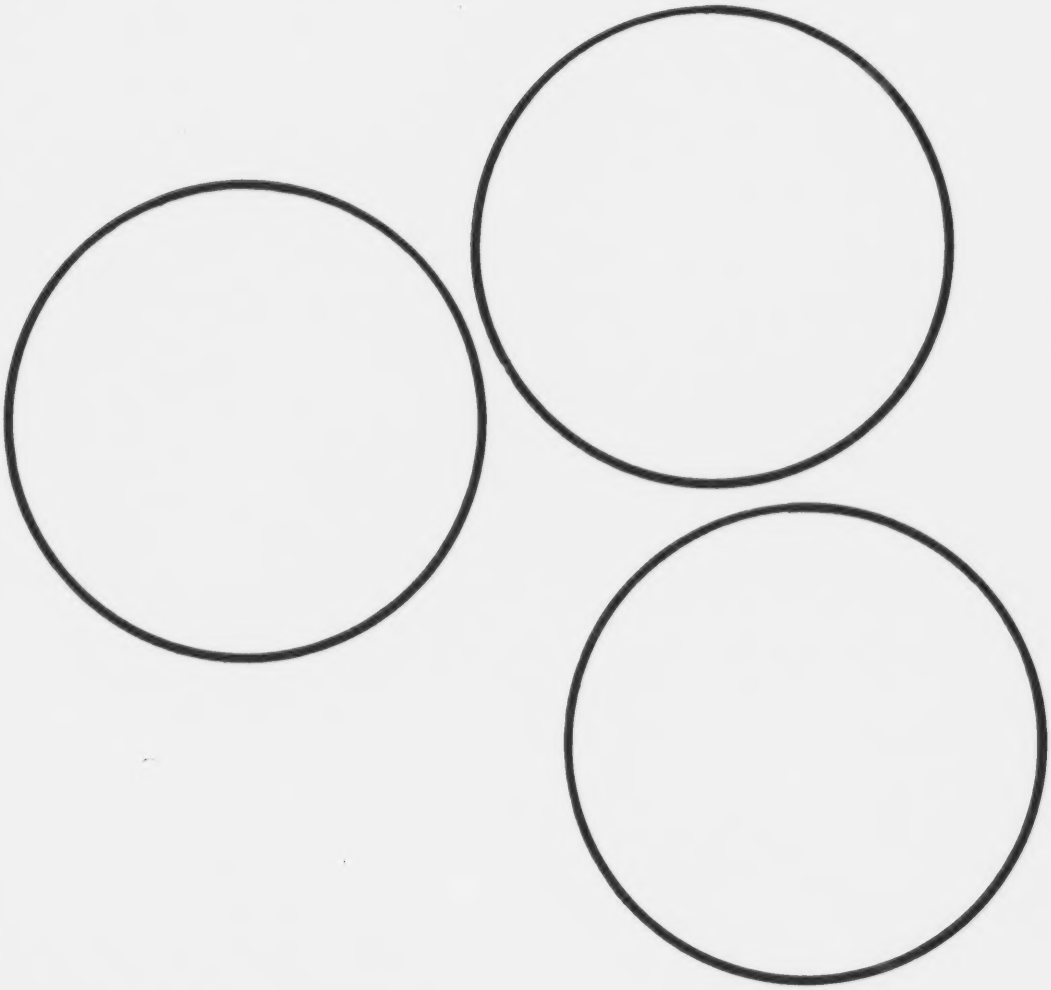
He's got a whole balloon in his hands,
She's got a whole balloon in her hands.
They've got a whole balloon in their hands,
They've got a whole balloon!

Caution:
Watch for children putting the balloons in their mouths. It's easy to choke on a broken balloon or a balloon that has not been blown up.

Also be aware of children who may have hypersensitive responses to the noise of a balloon breaking. In some children, it may elicit seizures. Children who startle severely should not participate in this activity.

Consultation:
Consult with staff members regarding appropriate levels of auditory stimulation for each child.

PATTERN FOR BALLOONS



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Ball

Context:

Experiencing a ball through (adaptive) ball play

Content/Target vocabulary:

ball, bat, basket, floor, tray/table
look, listen, hear, feel
throw, swing, hit, kick, roll, fly
round, hard, fast, slow
up, down, through, in

Preparation:

Collect magazine pictures of ball-oriented sports. Bring balls of different sizes and colors to the classroom.

Other materials:

a plastic bat
a container into which the children may throw the ball
a large piece of poster board
scissors
glue

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the different balls to the children. Encourage the children to track the balls and to watch them as they move. Encourage the children to listen to the sound of the ball bouncing on the floor or being hit. Let them hold the balls and play with them. Discuss the roundness of the ball, how it travels across the table or wheelchair tray, how it can roll across the floor, and how it can fly through the air.

Active Participation

Demonstrate how to hit the ball with the bat. Show baseball pictures, and assist each child with hitting the ball with the bat. Utilize each child's best fine motor skills, but level the task to each child's ability. Some children may be able to hold the bat, others may hit a stationary ball with the bat, and still others may be able to attempt the swing. Assign communicative intent to each child's reaction to the event. Take turns kicking a ball around the circle. Then have the children pass the ball around the circle. Discuss how the ball is thrown into the basket in basketball. Then assist each child in throwing the ball into the basket. Cheer loudly, and assign communicative intent to each child's reactions to the event.

Symbolic Representation

Have the children look again at the sports pictures. Assist the children in choosing pictures to represent their favorite ball sport. Cut out the favorite pictures, and assist the children in gluing their pictures onto a large poster board. Hang the poster in the classroom. Discuss various ball sports and the language group experience.

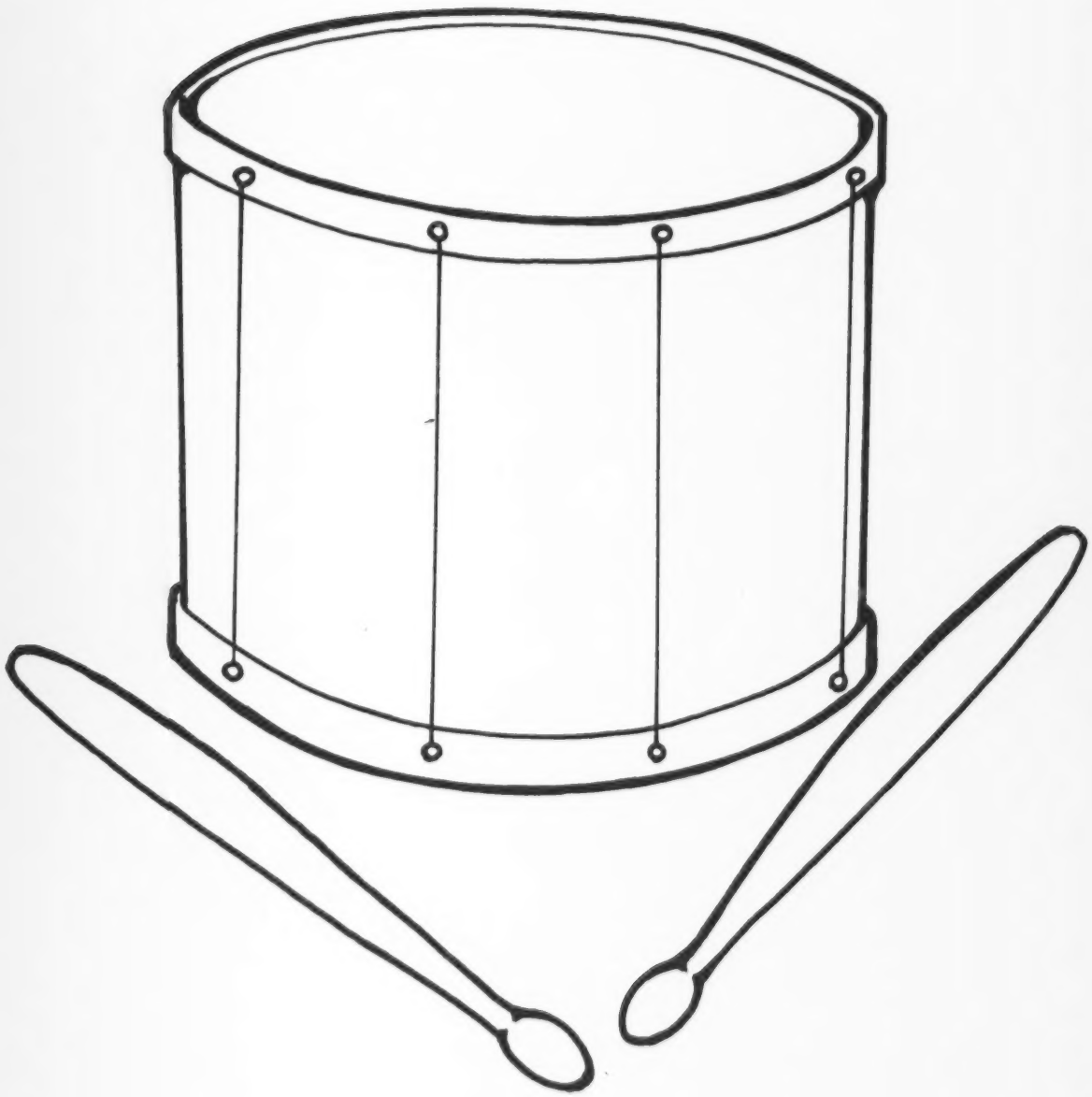
Sing "Take Me Out to the Ball Game."

Caution:

Use extra caution when using the bat and throwing the ball around the room.

Consultation:

Talk with the occupational therapist or physical therapist about limitations or special instructions in moving the children's limbs as you assist them in kicking a ball and swinging a bat.



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Drum

Context:

Experiencing a drum
Playing a drum

Content/Target vocabulary:

drumstick, paper, marker, tape
look, listen, feel
hit, tap, slap, pound, cover, color
round, various colors
on

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a drum (one copy for each child).

Borrow a drum from the school music department or a staff member or friend.

Collect a coffee can and two sticks for each child.

Other materials:

construction paper
masking tape
colored marking pens

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and play the drum for each child. Encourage the child to listen to the drum. Show the child how to tap and hit the drum. Have the child place both hands around the drum and feel it vibrate. Attempt to do this task in an exchange which will encourage turn taking. Prompt each child to use a stick so that two children are hitting the drum at the same time. Play "Pass the Drumstick" so that while the teacher is moving around the language group with the drum, the children are passing the drumstick.

Active Participation

Give each child a coffee can. Encourage the children to tap the top of the can with their hands and to hit it with their sticks. Cover the coffee can with construction paper, using tape. Hand out the marking pens and assist the children in decorating the construction paper. Take turns playing with the drums.

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a picture of a drum, and assist them in coloring the pictures.

Sing "The Drum Song" (to the tune of "Little Drummer Boy"):

Look at this drum with me.
Pa-rum-pa-pa-pum!
Come hit the drum with me.
Pa-rum-pa-pa-pum!
Let's tap it with our hands.
Pa-rum-pa-pa-pum!
Let's hit it with our sticks.
Pa-rum-pa-pa-pum!
Now hear the sound it makes.
Pa-rum-pa-pa-pum!
Beautiful drum!

Caution:

Some children may have hypersensitive responses to the sound of the drum. If you see a child continuously startling, remove the child from that auditory stimulation. In some children, it may elicit seizures.

Consultations:

Consult with staff members regarding appropriate levels of auditory stimulation for each child.

Consult with the occupational therapist on methods of improving each child's grasp of the stick and of facilitating eye-hand coordination for hitting the drum.

Discuss with the teacher the child's cognitive ability to use a stick for this early object-to-object tool use.

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Doll

Context:

Playing with a doll

Content/Target vocabulary:

doll, brush, spoon, washcloth, face, mouth, eyes
touch, look, feel, listen
rock, hold, kiss, brush, feed, wash, glue, dress
small, plastic or cloth, pretty
on

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a doll (one copy for each child).

Materials:

a doll
a spoon
a hairbrush
a hand mirror
a washcloth
fabric scraps
glue

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the children the doll. Encourage them to look at the doll, touch it, hold it, and look at themselves in the mirror with the doll. Stand behind each child and point to the child's face and to the face of the doll. Describe the doll and the child in the mirror. Encourage the child to hold up the doll and show it to the next child in the circle. Encourage them to engage in give-and-take by passing the doll to the next child.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle with the doll again. Ask the children to hold the doll, rock it, and kiss it. Then show the children how to brush the doll's hair. Encourage them to hold the doll and brush its hair independently. Show the children how to feed the doll with a spoon. Encourage each child to hold the spoon and bring it to the doll's mouth independently. Discuss how the doll is messy after eating, and show the children how to use a washcloth to wash the doll's face. Encourage the child to hold the washcloth and pretend to wash the doll. Assign communicative intent to each child's reaction to the doll and to the various tasks.

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a picture of the doll, and allow them to choose a fabric scrap. Put glue on the picture of the doll's dress, and encourage each child to dress the doll by putting the fabric scrap on the glue. Discuss how pretty each child's doll is. Assign communicative intent to each child's reactions to the doll and to the picture task. You may want to help each child color the doll's face and hair while discussing the doll. Hang the pictures around the room, and discuss the language group task throughout the day.

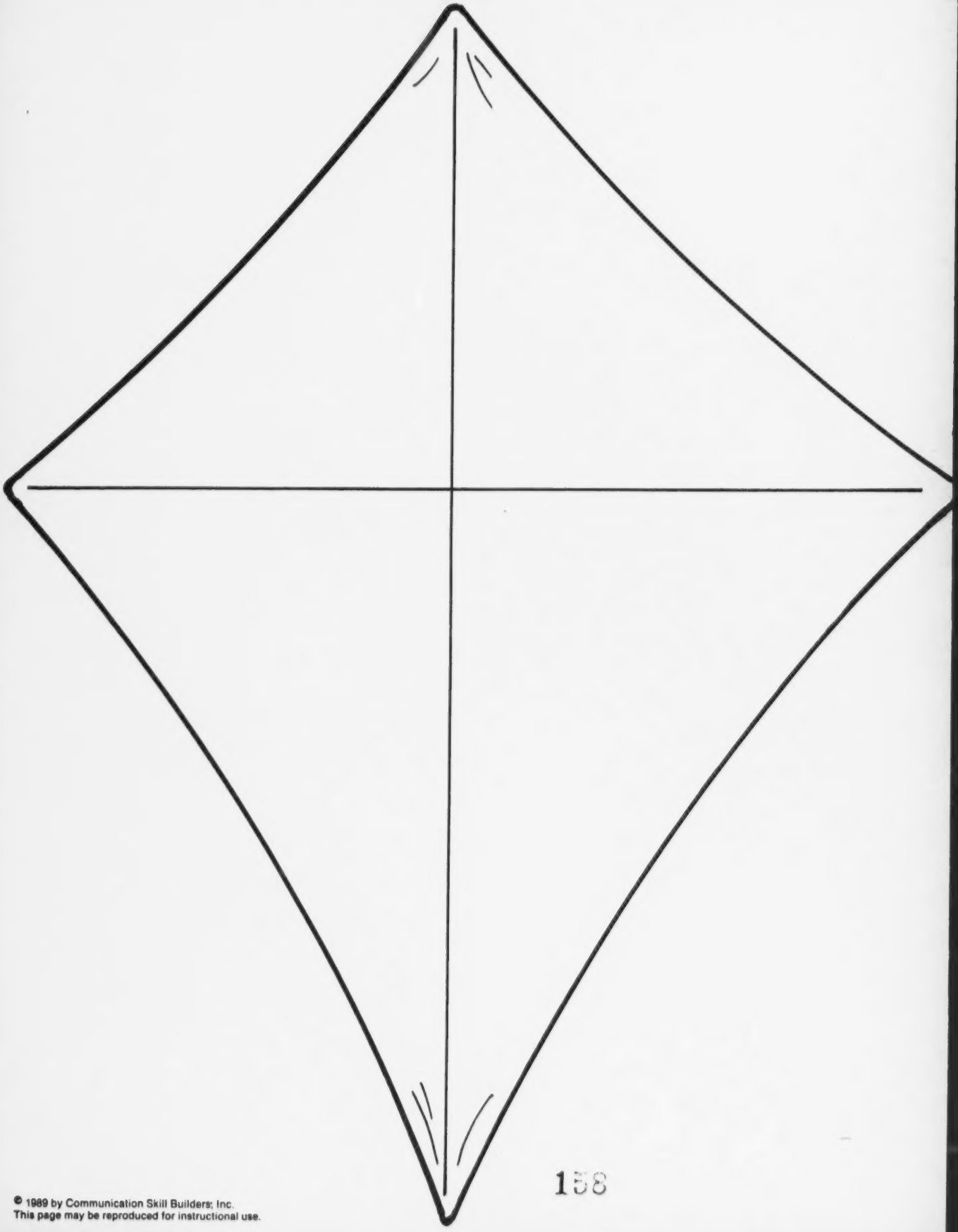
Sing "The Doll Song" (to the tune of "Kum Ba Ya"):

Rock the dolly, rock the doll,
Rock the dolly, rock the doll,
Rock the dolly, rock the doll,
Oh (child's name), rock the doll.

Feed the dolly, feed the doll,
Feed the dolly, feed the doll,
Feed the dolly, feed the doll,
Oh (child's name), feed the doll.

Wash the dolly, wash the doll,
Wash the dolly, wash the doll,
Wash the dolly, wash the doll,
Oh (child's name), wash the doll.

Dress the dolly, dress the doll,
Dress the dolly, dress the doll,
Dress the dolly, dress the doll,
Oh (child's name), dress the doll.



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Kite

Context:

Preparing a kite
Flying a kite

Content/Target vocabulary:

kite, string, tail, cloth
listen, see, feel
tie, fly, move, drop
pretty, paper, various colors
up, down

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of the kite (one copy for each child).

Assemble a kite to bring to the classroom.

Shopping list:

kite
string

Other materials:

cloth strips for kite tails
an electric fan
tape
colored marking pens

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the kite to the children. Then tape the kite to the ceiling and turn on the electric fan. Discuss how the kite looks and moves. Assign communicative intent to each child's reaction to the kite.

Active Participation

Tell the children, "We are going to make a kite." Discuss how the kite will be assembled. Go around the language group circle and have each child assist you in putting together the kite according to each child's ability. Encourage each child to assist in preparing to fly the kite. Some children may be able to choose which piece of cloth to add to the kite tail, while others may hold the kite or help tie the tail. Discuss how the kite was assembled. Then take the children outside and fly the kite. Have each child attend to the kite in the sky as much as possible. After returning to the class, discuss the ceiling kite and compare it to the kite flown outside.

Symbolic Representation

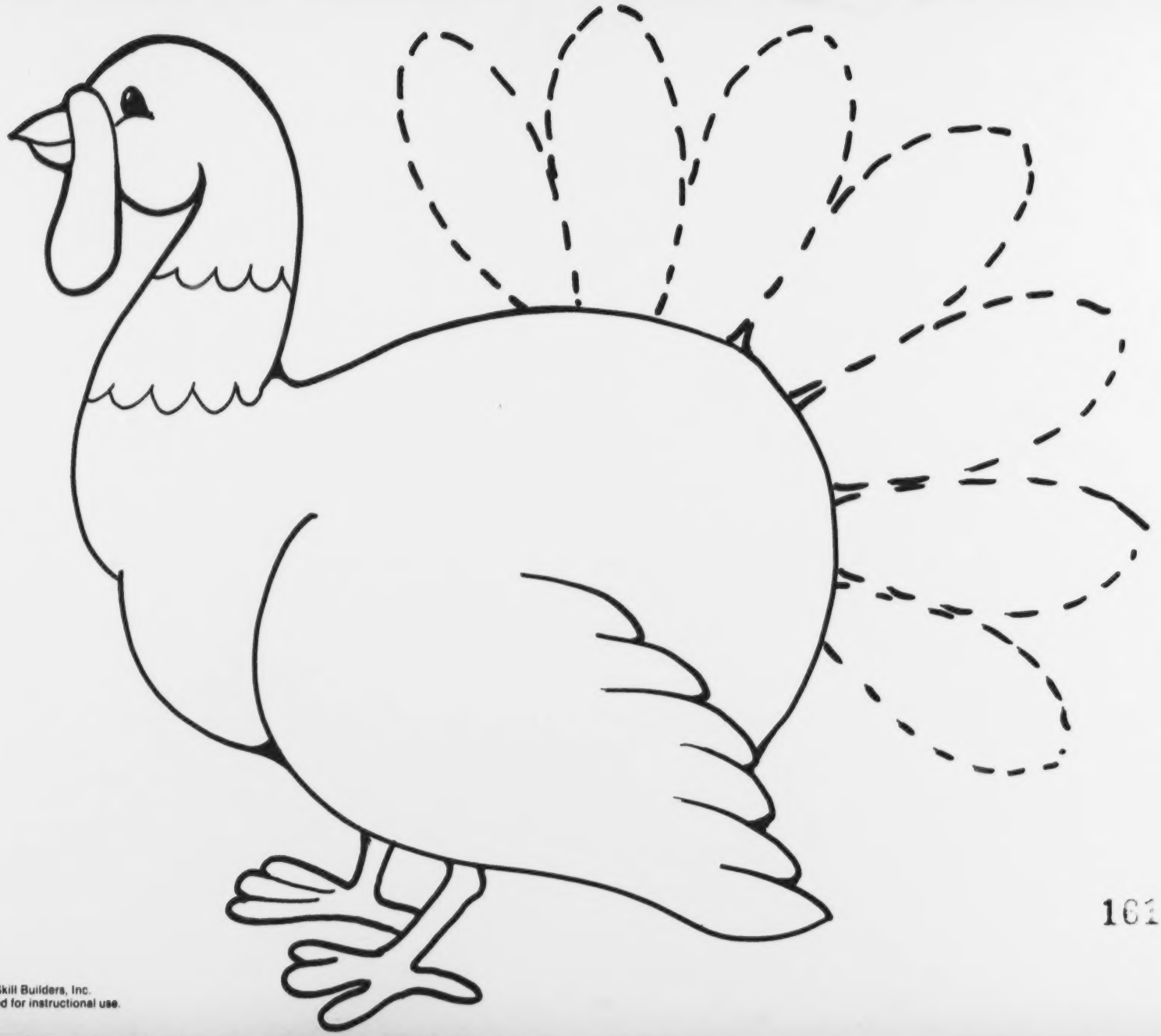
Give each child a copy of the kite picture. Assist each child in coloring the kite. Tape a string-and-cloth tail to each kite picture, and hang the pictures from the ceiling. Turn on the fan to blow all the kite tails.

Sing, "Let's Go Fly A Kite."

Caution:

Some children may need sunglasses while outside.

Don't let the children put the marking pens in their mouths.



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Turkey

Context:

Experiencing colored feathers
Experiencing turkey flavor
Preparing canned turkey gravy and stuffing mix

Content/Target vocabulary:

turkey, stuffing, gravy, saucepan, feathers
taste, feel, look, smell, listen
open, pour, stir, cook, glue
hot, soft, pretty, various colors
in, on, out

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a turkey (one copy for each child).

Collect some colorful feathers (a few for each child).

Buy a turkey poster. Tape some of the colorful feathers on its tail.

Shopping list:

a turkey poster
turkey stuffing mix and ingredients
a can of turkey gravy

Other materials:

glue
an audiotape of turkey sounds
a tape player
a saucepan
a bowl or plate and a spoon or fork for each child
a stirring spoon
a can opener

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the turkey poster. Encourage each child to look at the poster and touch the feathers. Discuss the child's reactions to the turkey poster. Turn on the audiotape of the turkey sounds, hold the tape player behind the turkey poster, and talk about the sounds the turkey makes. Have fun seeing who can make some of the best turkey sounds. Encourage the children to imitate any aspect of the turkey sounds. Discuss the child's reactions to the sounds.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle and have each child participate in making turkey stuffing. Heat the turkey gravy and pour some of it over the stuffing. Use the extra turkey gravy with any children who might have oral-motor difficulties with a drier stuffing. After each child participates in making the turkey dressing and gravy, have each child taste the gravy. Discuss each child's reactions to the taste of turkey.

Symbolic Representation

Clean each child's work space. Give each child a copy of the turkey picture. Assist each child in gluing a few turkey feathers onto the picture. Discuss each child's reactions to the feel of the feathers and to the symbolic task. Discuss how pretty each child's turkey looks. Hang the pictures around the room. Discuss the language group activity throughout the day.

Sing "The Turkey Song" (to the tune of "Auld Lang Syne"):

Oh, darkest brown and gray and black
And tan and crimson, too!
Oh, pretty, pretty turkey feathers!
Pretty turkey bird!

Caution:

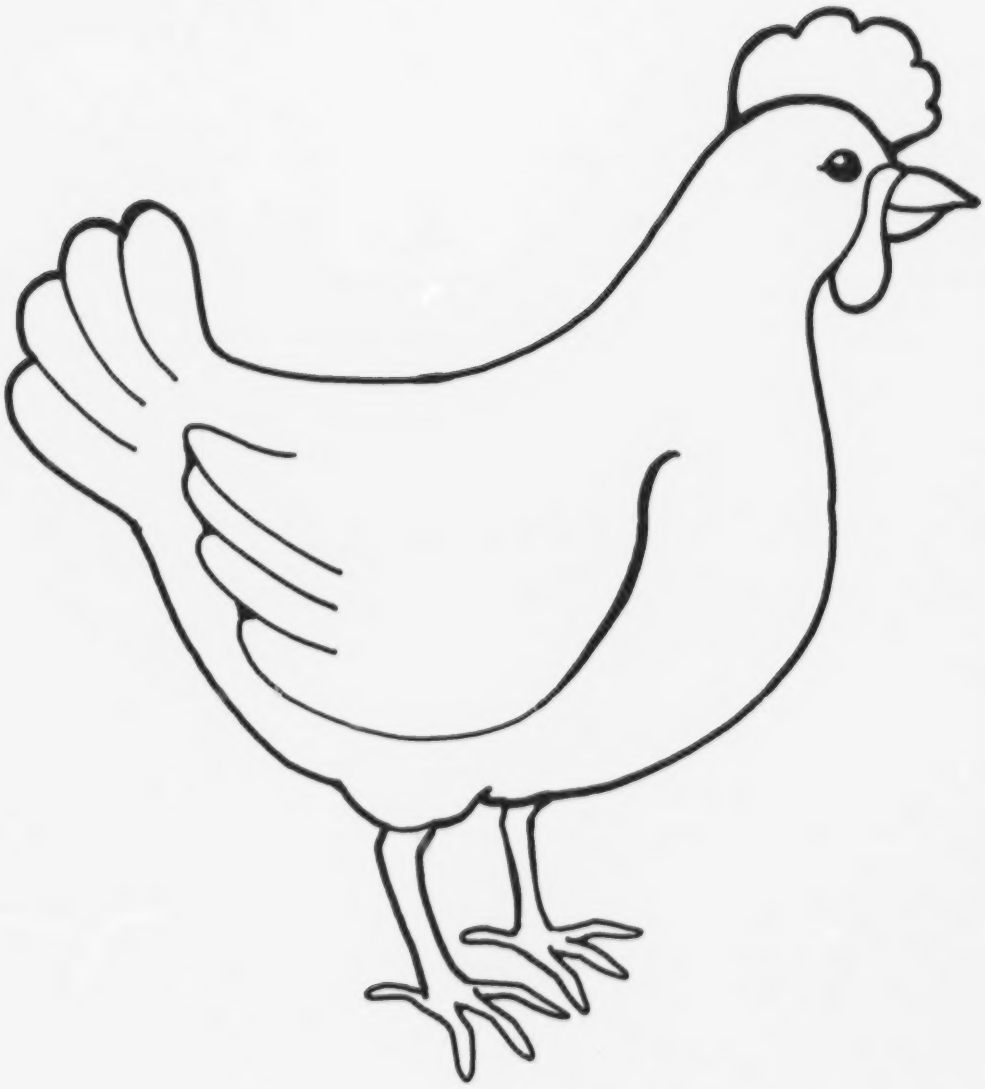
Be sure the children don't put feathers in their mouths.

Consultations:

Consult with the feeding therapist regarding any children who may have oral motor difficulties with the turkey dressing.

Discuss with medical staff any children who may have problems with ingredients in the turkey stuffing or turkey gravy.

Determine whether any children are allergic to feathers.



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Chicken

Context:

Experiencing chicken feathers
Experiencing chicken flavor
Heating canned chicken a la king

Content/Target vocabulary:

chicken, feathers, bowl, spoon, plate
feel, taste, smell, look, listen
pick up, open, cook, stir, eat, put
smooth, fluffy, warm, white
in, on

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a chicken. Make a copy for each child.

Collect some white feathers (a few for each child).

Buy a chicken poster. Tape some of the white feathers on the poster.

Shopping list:

a chicken poster
a can of chicken a la king

Other materials:

construction paper (one sheet)
glue
an audiotape of chicken sounds
a tape player
a can opener
a saucepan
a stirring spoon
a bowl and a spoon for each child
yarn

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and show the chicken poster. Let each child feel the chicken feathers. Discuss the body parts of the chicken (eyes, feet, bill). Label each child's reaction to the chicken poster. Discuss how the chicken feathers feel. Turn on the audiotape of the chicken sounds, hold the tape recorder behind the chicken poster, and talk about the sounds the chicken makes.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle and have the children assist in opening the can of chicken a la king. Tell the children, "Teacher bought the can of chicken at the store, and now we are all going to cook it to eat." Have the children assist in stirring the chicken as it heats. Let each child taste the chicken, and discuss each child's reaction to the snack.

Symbolic Representation

Glue the label from the chicken a la king can to a sheet of construction paper. Go around the language group circle and show it to the children. Assist the children in moving their gaze from left to right as they look at the picture of the chicken, the label from the can, and then the plate of food. Assist the children in gluing the feathers on the picture of the chicken. Describe the chicken pictures and have the children show their work to one another. Hang up the pictures. Drape pieces of yarn from every two feathered pictures down to one picture of the label.

Sing "The Chicken Song" (to the tune of "Buffalo Bill, Won't You Come Out Tonight?"):

She went to the store and picked up the can,
Picked up the can, picked up the can.
She went to the store and picked up the can,
And brought it to our school.

We opened the can and cooked up the meat,
Cooked up the meat, cooked up the meat.
We opened the can and cooked up the meat,
And ate it with our friends.

Caution:

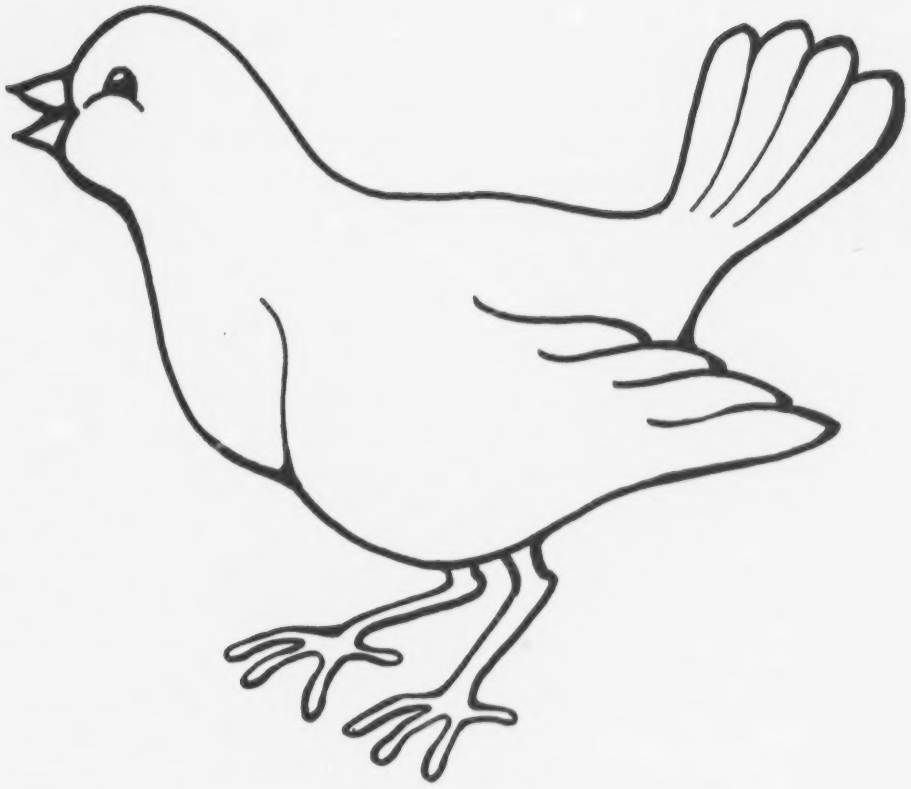
Be sure the children don't put feathers in their mouths.

Consultations:

Check with medical staff regarding any children who may have allergies to feathers or to the ingredients in chicken a la king.

Watch the children carefully for tactile defensiveness, and discuss this with the occupational therapist in advance. Do not overstimulate the children.

Discuss with the teacher that this language group activity involves higher cognitive and sensorimotor skills, primarily because of the more refined picture tasks and the absence of the actual object—a chicken.



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Wild Birds

Context:

Experiencing birds
Feeding birds
Making a bird mobile

Content/Target vocabulary:

bird, bird seed, feathers, glue, book, beak, feet, eyes
listen, look, feel
fly, hop, skip, run, eat, peck, chirp
pretty, various colors, small, soft
in, on

Preparation:

For a week or two before the language group, throw bird seed on the ground outside the classroom window to attract birds.

Collect some bird feathers (a few for each child).

Photocopy the picture of a bird (one copy for each child).

Shopping list:

bird seed

Other materials:

an audiotape of bird sounds
a tape player
glue
scissors
yarn
tape
a book with large, colorful pictures of birds

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Take the children to the window and show them the birds eating the seeds you have thrown on the ground. Discuss how the birds look. Discuss their feathers, beak, feet, and eyes. Discuss their movements (hopping, skipping, running, flying). Assign communicative intent to each child's responses to the birds.

Active Participation

Take the children outside, give each child some bird seed, and let the children feed the birds. Discuss how birds eat. Give each child a copy of the bird picture. Assist them in gluing feathers on their bird pictures. Discuss how soft the feathers are and how feathers keep the birds warm. Cut out the birds and tape them on pieces of yarn. Hang the birds from the ceiling. Play the bird sounds. Assign communicative intent to each child's responses to the birds fluttering from the ceiling and the sounds of the bird calls.

Symbolic Representation

Go around the language group circle and show each child several pictures in the bird book. Discuss the various types of birds and their different colors and shapes.

Sing "The Bird Song" (to the tune of "Red Red Robin"):

When the bird-bird-birdie comes fly-fly-flying along, along,
There'll be no more crying when he starts singing his old sweet song.
Cheer up, cheer up, get out of bed,
Cheer up, cheer up, lift up your head,
When the bird-bird-birdie comes fly-fly-flying along.

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A Parade

Context:

Experiencing a parade
Participating in a parade

Content/Target vocabulary:

flags, streamers, parade, clowns, bands
listen, look, feel
march, decorate, color
various colors, pretty, fun
in, out

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of a marching band member and a clown (one copy for each child).

Obtain a videotape or filmstrip of a parade and the equipment for showing it.

Shopping list:

felt squares
crepe paper strips

Other materials:

a stick for each child (to hold a flag)
glue
a staple gun
a record or audiotape of marching music
a record player or tape player
a camera (if available)
tape
scissors
crayons
a drumstick for each child

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

If possible, take the language group to a parade. If that is not possible, present a filmstrip or videotape, or watch a parade on TV. Discuss the music and the costumes. Discuss the crowds and the parade marching down the street. Assign communicative intent to each child's responses to the sights and sounds of the parade.

Active Participation

Tell the children, "We are going to have our own classroom parade." Discuss the need for making flags and decorating the streamers. Give each child a felt square to make a flag. Put glue on the felt, and assist each child in gluing down scrap materials. Staple the flag to a stick. Assist the children in using the crepe paper streamers to decorate their wheelchairs and each other. Discuss the colors and the feel of the crepe paper. Play marching music, and have a parade around the room. If a camera is available, take pictures of the parade. Discuss each child's reactions to the language group tasks. Talk about each child's flags and the streamers. Compare them to the flags and costumes seen in the videotape parade. Assign communicative intent.

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a picture of a band member and a clown. Assist the children in coloring their pictures. Cut out the pictures and tape them on the wall or put them on the bulletin board. Play the parade music while you discuss the paper parade and point to each child's artwork. Discuss the language group experience. Give each child a drumstick, and allow the children to hit their wheelchair trays or work stations in tune to the marching music.

Caution:

Watch for children who may overstimulate due to the loud music.

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Easter Eggs

Context:

Coloring eggs
Finding eggs

Content/Target vocabulary:

eggs, dye
listen, look, feel, taste, smell
dip, color, hide, find
various colors, smooth, pretty
prepositions of location, (under, next to, behind, in front of, between)

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of eggs in a basket (one copy for each child).

Hard boil two eggs for each child.

Shopping list:

an egg-dyeing kit and materials

Other materials:

cups for egg dye
spoons
paper towels
crayons
a basket

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and give each child a hard-boiled egg. Discuss with each child how the egg has been cooked. Allow the children to roll the egg around on their work trays and to tap it on their work stations. Assist the children in peeling the hard-boiled eggs and tasting them. Assign communicative intent to each child's response. Assist the children in cleaning up their work stations and picking up the egg shells.

Active Participation

Go around the language group circle and give each child another hard-boiled egg. Assist the children in dipping the eggs into the dye to color them. Discuss the smell of the dye and the changing color of the egg. Assign communicative intent to each child's response. Collect the colored eggs. Ask all of the children to cover their eyes while the eggs are hidden around the room (or outside, if possible). Pursue an Easter egg hunt. Assist each child in finding at least one egg. Discuss the location of the eggs (such as under, next to, behind, in front of). Put the eggs in a basket as they are gathered.

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a picture of eggs in a basket. Assist each child in using colors to color the eggs in the basket. Hang the colored pictures around the room. Discuss the language group experience throughout the day.

Sing "The Egg Hunt Song" (to the tune of "A-Hunting We Will Go"):

A-hunting we will go,
A-hunting we will go.
Let's all color some Easter eggs
And hide them in the grass.

A-hunting we will go,
A-hunting we will go.
Let's all find some Easter eggs
And eat them for a snack.

Consultation:

Check with medical staff or records to determine whether any children are allergic to eggs.

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Halloween

Context:

Experiencing a Halloween party
Making a mask
Wearing a mask
Looking at others wearing masks

Content/Target vocabulary:

mask, paper, plastic, mirror, eyes, nose, mouth
listen, look, feel
wear make up, color, cut
scary, ugly, pretty, funny
on, off, over

Preparation:

Photocopy the picture of children in costumes (one copy for each child).

Collect pictures and photographs of Halloween parties.

Bring a mask for each child.

Other materials:

a mirror
a record or audiotape of dirges and scary sounds
a record player or tape player
a camera (if available)
a large paper plate for each child
scissors
crayons
tongue depressors
glue

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Give each child a mask. Go around the language group circle while holding a mask in front of your face and then down away from your face. Do this several times while directing each child's attention to the mask and to the action of putting the mask in front of your face and taking it away. Go around the language group circle with the mirror, and put a mask on and off the children while they look at themselves in the mirror. Direct the attention of the other children to the masked child. Have the children trade masks and repeat the activity. After the children have attended to the masks several times, collect the masks. Discuss the various features of the masks. Discuss each child's reactions to the events, and assign communicative intent.

Active Participation

Give each child a paper plate. Go around the language group circle, cutting out large eye-holes in each child's plate and drawing a nose and a mouth. Assist the children in coloring their paper plate masks and in gluing the tongue depressor to the bottom (the "chin") of the mask. Assist the children in grasping the depressor and in holding the masks in front of their faces. Direct the children's attention to looking at each other's masks. Help the children to look at themselves in the mirror. Assign communicative intent to each child's responses to these tasks.

Symbolic Representation

Give each child a picture of the children in costumes. Assist each child in coloring the picture. Hang the pictures around the room. Show pictures of Halloween costumes. Discuss the various costumes and the Halloween party. Assist the children in putting on their masks. Have a parade around the room or down the hall while playing the radio or audiotape of dirges and scary sounds. This is an excellent opportunity to take pictures of the children.

A Picnic

Context:

Experiencing a picnic
Preparing picnic foods

Content/Target vocabulary:

beans, franks, picnic, outside, sunshine, picnic table
listen, look, feel, taste, smell
eating, setting the table, mixing, opening, scooping, sharing
fun, paper plates, cups, fresh air
in, out, open

Preparation:

Ask parents to send pictures of family and friends having picnics.

Collect magazine pictures of picnic foods.

Cook some frankfurters to bring to the classroom picnic. Cut them in small pieces.

Shopping list:

cans of beans
frankfurters

Other materials:

paper plates
paper cups
paper napkins
a spoon for each child
a can opener
a stirring spoon
a large bowl with a lid
poster board
scissors
glue

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

If possible, take the class to a park to observe people picnicking. Discuss the picnic tables and the fun of eating outside. Talk about how nice it is to smell the fresh air and be in the sunshine. Share the pictures of the picnics with families and friends. Discuss the pictures with each child. Talk about various kinds of picnic foods and the materials needed for picnics, such as paper plates, napkins, forks, and spoons.

Active Participation

Encourage the children to watch or assist in opening the cans of beans. Ask each child to put a spoonful of beans and some franks in the bowl. Ask each child to assist in stirring the beans and franks. Go outside, share some of the food, and enjoy the picnic.

Symbolic Representation

Return to the room and discuss the picnic event. Make a collage of picnic foods. Talk about the various foods in the collage. Assign communicative intent to each child's reaction to the pictures of picnic foods and to the picnic event. Hang the collage in the room, and discuss the picnic throughout the day. Sing "The Picnic Song" (to the tune of "By the Light of the Silvery Moon"):

Picnic fun! Eating lunch in the sun!
We'll bring our food
And we'll eat it outside,
Oh, my!

Picnic fun! Eating lunch in the sun!
The sun's so high
Up in the sky.
We're outside with our friends,
Eating lunch in the sun!

Caution:

You may want to apply sunscreen to the children's skin before going outside.

A Puppet Show

Context:

Playing with puppets
Making a puppet

Content/Target vocabulary:

puppet, puppet show, wolf, Grandma, Little Red Riding Hood
listen, look, feel
show, give, take, move, talk
funny, pretty, crinkly, soft
in, on, off, out

Preparation:

Photocopy the pictures of Little Red Riding Hood, the wolf, and Grandma (one copy of each figure). Cut out and color the figures. Glue a tongue depressor onto each figure to make a stick puppet. Have them available to use as you tell the story to the language group.

Bring a variety of puppets to the classroom.

Shopping list:

brown paper lunch bags (one for each child)

Other materials:

scissors
crayons
tongue depressors
glue
yarn, cotton balls, fabric scraps, and other decorations

Procedure:

Sensory Experience

Go around the language group circle and encourage each child to play with the various puppets. Assist them in putting the puppets on and off their hands, their teacher's hands, and their neighbor's hands. Discuss how each puppet looks and feels. Encourage each child to manipulate the puppet independently. Encourage showing, giving, and taking with the various puppets. Assign communicative intent to each child's responses to the puppets.

Active Participation

Give each child a paper bag. Tell the children, "We are each going to make our own puppet." Provide glue, crayons, and other materials. Assist each child in drawing a face on the bag. Help them glue yarn for hair, color clothing, and decorate the bags. Assist each child in putting a hand into the bag and manipulating the bottom portion as if it were the puppet's mouth. Have the children show one another their puppets. Encourage the children to assist one another and share their puppets by putting them on each other's hands.

Symbolic Representation

Arrange the children in a semicircle to watch the puppet show. Tell the story of Little Red Riding Hood, with staff members holding the stick puppets and speaking the words for the characters. Include the children as much as possible in the story. Then discuss the language group experience with the children. Display the characters on the bulletin board, and discuss the story and the puppet show experience. Sing "The Puppet Song" (to the tune of "Mama's Little Baby Likes Short'nin' Bread"):

My best friend likes puppets, puppets.
I know I like puppets, too!
Bring out the crayons,
Bring out the glue.
I'm gonna make a little puppet, too!
My best friend likes puppets, puppets.
I know I like puppets, too!

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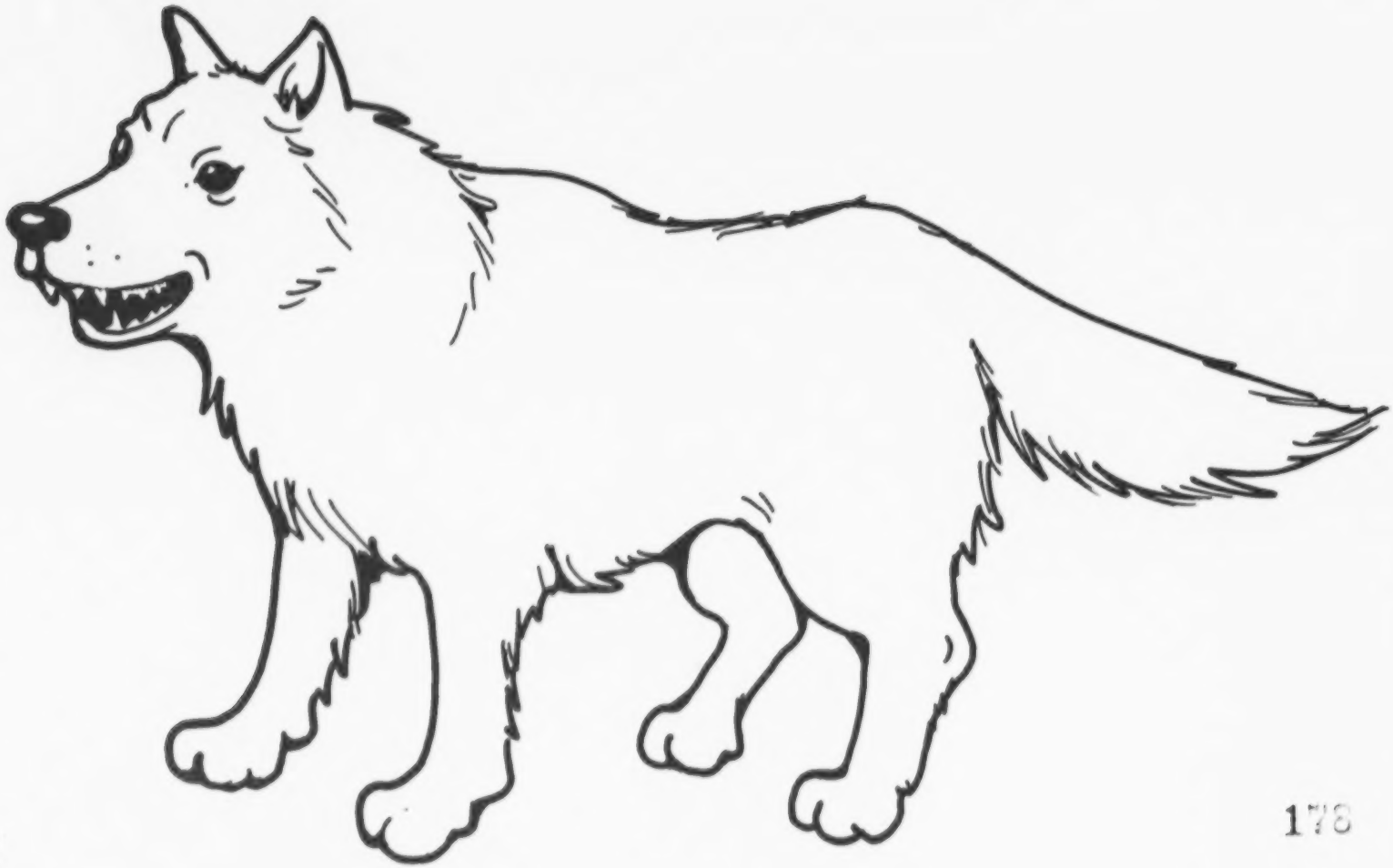

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